The Workers are Few

Paolo Manna, Joseph Francis McGlinchey

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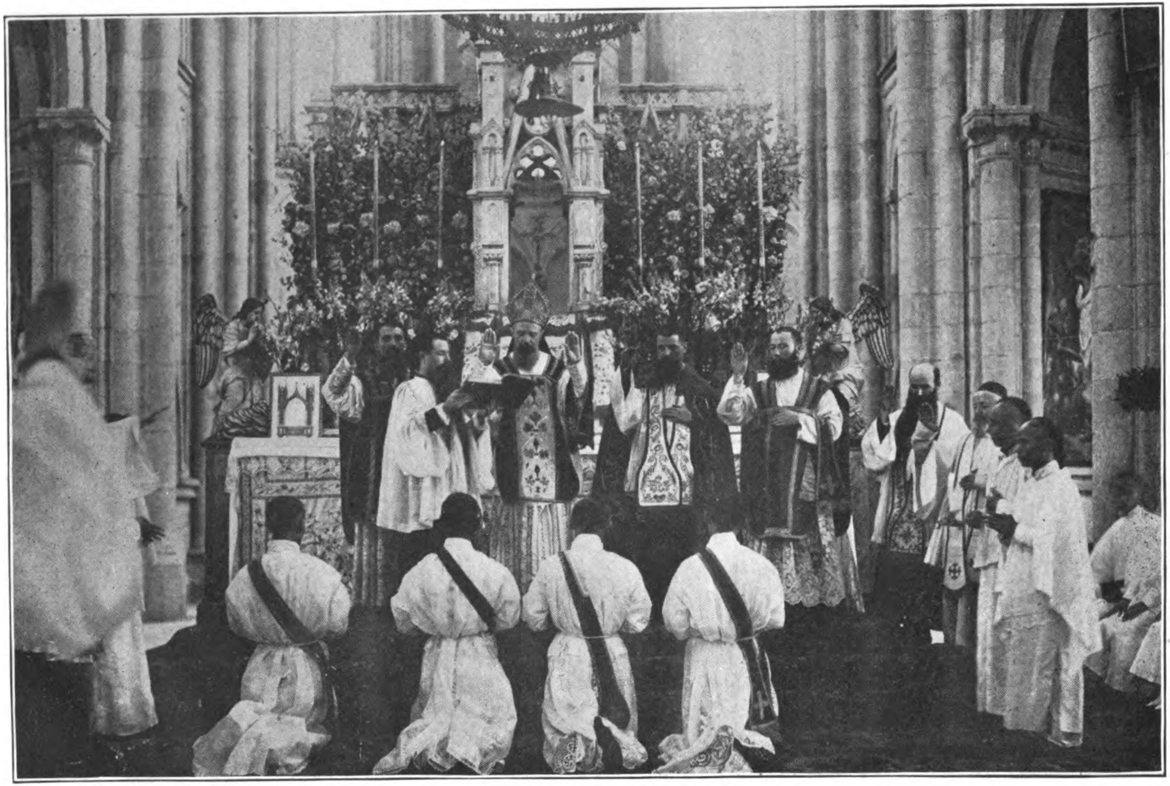

ORDINATION OF FOUR NATIVE CHINESE PRIESTS BY RT. REV. JEAN M. MEREL, D. D., AT CANTON

There are 700 Native Chinese Priests

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THE WORKERS ARE FEW

REFLECTIONS UPON VOCATION TO THE FOREIGN MISSIONS

TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN OF
REV. PAOLO MANNA, M.AP.

BY

REV. JOSEPH F. McGLINCHEY, D.D.
DIOCESAN DIRECTOR OF THE SOCIETY FOR
THE PROPAGATION OF THE FAITH

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Archbishop of Boston

BOSTON, September 29, 1911

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TO MY MOTHER

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Al diletto figlio Padre Paolo Manna Missionario Apostolico colle più sincere congratulazioni pel bel lavoro = Sulla Vocazione alle Missioni Estere = e col voto che molti rispondano generosamente alla voce del Signore, che li chiamasse a questo Apostolato, in segno di gratitudine e di particolare affetto, impartiamo l'Apostolica Benedizione.

Dal Vaticano li 12 Maggio 1909.

Pius PP. X.

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To our beloved son, Father Paul Manna, Missionary Apostolic, with sincere congratulations on the excellent work — *Upon Vocation to the Foreign Missions* — and with the hope that many will generously respond to the voice of the Lord which may call them to this Apostolate, as a mark of our gratitude and special affection, we impart the Apostolic Benediction.

POPE PIUS X

Given at the Vatican
May 12, 1909

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

In the few spare moments that an assistant may save from the many duties he is called upon to perform in a large city parish, the translation of this work was undertaken solely with the motive of aiding the modern apostles who are laboring in distant lands, away from civilization and human sympathy, to carry out the Master's injunction "Going therefore teach ye all nations"; "Preach the gospel to every creature."

A sufficient reward was found in the pleasure of becoming acquainted with such a zealous apostle as Father Manna, the author of the book. But when, in accordance with law and custom, the translation was submitted for approval to the Archbishop of Boston, now William Cardinal O'Connell, this first pleasure was enhanced by the cordial sympathy and hearty commendation freely granted by the noble and illustrious Prelate to the young priest presenting the fruit of his first literary endeavor. To quote His Grace's words: "I lend my support to anything that will promote God's honor and glory. And it is for this very purpose that the work of The Propagation of the Faith has been established. I trust the interest in this noble cause will not flag in my diocese. Do your very best to spread the mission spirit."

And now the work is even still dearer, since, within the very year in which this translation was begun,

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the writer has been summoned to assume official relations between the Archdiocese and the great missionary world; and this book becomes an additional means to further the worthy cause in which he finds himself enlisted. For, perchance, this English translation may reach some soul yearning to give itself unto the heathen for the faith of Christ, even as the original work has found its way to very many apostolic hearts.

The translation may have its defects consequent upon the inexperience of a beginner, but it is launched with the hope that it may do something of the good, though it be in a small degree, that has been accomplished by Father Manna's work among those of his own people into whose hands it has chanced to come.

With the primary motive of aiding the missionary, with the approval of His Eminence, the Archbishop of Boston, with the hope that the Divine Master will bless the effort, this work, the first English translation, is now given to the public by the translator.

JOSEPH F. MCGLINCHEY.

FEAST OF THE PRESENTATION,
November 21, 1911.

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THE WORKERS ARE FEW

INTRODUCTION

Few persons are disposed to give themselves wholly to God as they should; and among those who begin this noble life of self-sacrifice few are faithful to the end. Oh, a good missioner is of great value, but it is necessary that he get his inspiration from God. This is the work of His omnipotence and of His charity.

St. Vincent de Paul,
in a letter to M. Desdames.

Forced by our Lord to return from a beloved mission, I have asked myself how I could most usefully employ that time which, through failing health, I am obliged to spend far from my desired field of labor. My exile from the land of my choice would be less trying, if I could occupy myself with some labor that would promote the work of the missions; for what other purpose can a missionary have in life?

One day when I was reading the Acts of the Apostles, in the ninth chapter I came across these words of Our Lord to Ananias: *Arise and go into the street that is called Straight, and seek in the house of Judas, one named Saul of Tarsus, for behold he prayeth*[1] *. . . go, for this man is to me a vessel of election, to carry my name before the Gentiles.*[2]

Suddenly the idea flashed across my mind, that since I am not now called to be a Paul, why can I

[1] Acts ix. 11. [2] Acts ix. 15.

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not become an Ananias to some young man who is destined to be a vessel of election, and who is waiting for a word of encouragement to enable him to embrace that beautiful vocation of carrying the name of Christ to the Gentiles? But at the very outset a difficulty confronts me. Am I equal to the task? Vocations to the Foreign Missions! What a lofty subject! And naturally, I must address my appeal to young men. How shall I set them on fire with zeal? Well, I must find a way to do it, for the idea is too beautiful, the end too noble, to permit me to resist the impulse of my heart which persistently whispers, *Oh, if I could only enlist a few more young men among the volunteers of the Gospel!*

The question of Catholic Missions has never been treated thoroughly. True indeed, bishops and missionaries, in their pastorals and letters, have often exposed some side of it, when with pleading voices they have cried out for more missionaries, or have recommended the work of *The Propagation of the Faith.* Let me now add my humble appeal to theirs, and if it be not sufficient to move the souls of men, certainly the sufferings of so many heroes of the Faith, and the work of thousands of zealous apostles, should accomplish it. I have welcomed the invitation, and with the highest possible apostolic motives, I am ready for the work. I have read and collected whatever seemed to suit the purpose, and I have added a little of my own.

I do not know whether I have followed an inspiration or, through vanity, yielded to presumption. The work, such as it is, you have before you. It aspires but to this — *to fall into the hands of some young*

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man who, in a spirit of indecision and vacillation, calls out with Saul, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?*[1] and to carry to him the message of Ananias, *Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus hath sent me, He that appeared to thee in the way as thou camest, that thou mayst receive thy sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost.*[2]

[1] Acts ix. 6.
[2] Acts ix. 17.

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CHAPTER I

THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH AND THE APOSTOLATE

And unto all nations the gospel must first be preached.
***Mark* xiii. 10.**

THE most important problem that should interest every truly Christian soul is, without a doubt, that of the extension of the kingdom of God on earth. Twenty centuries have passed since our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in these solemn words, *All power is given to me in heaven and in earth; Going therefore teach ye all nations,*[1] entrusted to His Church the great and glorious mission of the conversion of the world. Twenty centuries have also passed since the Church, faithful to the mission which she has received through a long line of martyrs and triumphs, began to labor for the extension of this divine Kingdom on earth. The story of the Church is but one magnificent realization of those words of her divine Founder, *Teach ye all nations.* This command has lost none of its original force with the passing years. It is as strong to-day in all its fullness as it was in Christ's own time, and will remain so, as long as there are people to instruct, to baptize, and to save.

From the day on which the apostles, filled with the spirit of zeal, went forth out of the Cenacle,

[1] Matt. xxviii. 18, 19.

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and announced to Jerusalem the words of Eternal Life, down to our times, the Church has always tried to accomplish her purpose with a constancy unknown to human institutions; and this is a startling proof of her divine origin. In a word, the apostolic spirit with which the Christian Church was imbued at its origin, has been perpetuated to our day, and still lives in the Church. *Woe to me if I do not evangelize the earth,* she will repeat with St. Paul to the very end of time. She would shudder to think of the day when the divine Fire of Pentecost would be extinguished in her. She would pass through a great crisis, should this apostolic zeal grow weak. This mission the Church accomplishes through her apostles, for in founding the Church Jesus Christ instituted an apostolate.

This apostolate proposes to propagate the same faith that He preached, and to make shine, where darkness now reigns, that Light which must illumine all men who come into this world. In a word, to announce the gospel which Jesus Christ preached to men, is the work of Christ's ministers. This is the end of the apostolate. For this end Christ instituted the Church, and gave her the same divine authority which He Himself possessed; *As the Father hath sent me, I also send you.*[1]

The apostle, the missionary, is another Christ, who goes from one country to another preaching His gospel; he is another Christ, who carries the Cross upon his shoulders through the highways and byways of the world; he is another Christ, who goes about moistening with his blood the soil of

[1] John xx. 21.

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the earth; he is another Christ, who goes in search of *all* the sheep, to lead them into the fold of His Church. Jesus Christ is not dead. He still lives in the Church. He dwells upon our altars. He walks through the streets of our cities and towns, diffusing His light amid the darkness of the world, showing the true path to the erring sons of Adam, instructing those who have been buried in the errors and vices of Paganism for centuries. The apostle, the missionary, is the Christ who goes through the world *doing good to all, and curing all.* He is the Christ who *went about all the cities and towns teaching . . . and preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every infirmity.*[1]

How grand, when considered in such a light, is the character of the apostle!

The ancient world had its priests and its prophets; it had its legislators and its warriors, but it never knew the figure of the apostle, of the Catholic missionary, because it did not know the idea which inspires him. In a word, the day on which our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ pronounced those solemn words, and imparted to His twelve apostles the divine command, *Go ye into the whole world and preach the gospel to every creature,*[2] on that day, a great idea, an idea which was absolutely new, startled this small, egotistical world. It was the idea of the apostolate of the universal religion. "Behold," writes the author of the Genius of Christianity, "Behold one of those grand ideas which pertain to the Christian religion alone.

"To the cultured idolaters, the divine enthusiasm

[1] Matt. ix. 35. [2] Mark xvi. 15.

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A First Communion Day in Alaska

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which animates the apostle was not known. The old philosophers never abandoned the porticos of their Academies or the delights of Athens, to follow any such sublime impulse as that of civilizing the savage, of instructing the ignorant, of caring for the sick, of clothing the poor, and of bringing conciliation and peace to hostile nations. All these things Christianity did and continues to do to-day. The seas, the tempests, the cold of the far North, the heat of the Tropics, do not discourage the ministers of the gospel. They live with the Esquimaux, and dress in their sealskins; they are satisfied with the whale oil of the inhabitants of Greenland; they suffer the solitude of the Tartar and the Iroquois; they ride the dromedary of the Arab, and follow the Kaffir in his wanderings through scorching deserts. The Chinese, the inhabitants of Japan, and the Indians are numbered among their neophytes. There is not a land nor a reef in the ocean, which has escaped their zeal; and, just as in olden times, there were not kingdoms enough to satisfy the ambition of Alexander, so to-day the earth is too small to exhaust the charity of the apostle." *Go ye into the whole world* — words which are truly divine and have their origin in the mind of the Sovereign of the universe. What religious reformer, before or after Christ, dared to give such a command? The Catholic apostolate, according to the above words of the gospel, is destined to propagate the faith of Christ among all peoples and nations, and in every region of the globe. *We have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith in all nations.*[1] Christ

[1] Rom. i. 5.

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is the sun of truth and of goodness, destined gradually to enlighten and inspire with zeal all the nations of the globe, and no people will ever be able to escape His beneficent influence. *There is no one that can hide himself from his heat.*[1]

Isaias has clearly predicted the calling of all nations to the faith of the true God. With his prophetic spirit he beheld all the generations of Christian apostles who will ever preach the gospel, passing before him. They go from country to country preaching a universal religion, a religion of love and of true Christian brotherhood, a religion of true equality among men, all of whom are sons of the one true, supreme God, the Father of the universe. *Who are these that fly as doves to their windows? For the islands wait for me, and the ships of the sea in the beginning, that I may bring thy sons from afar . . . to the name of the Lord thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel.*[2] *. . . I will send of them that shall be saved to the Gentiles, into the sea, into Africa and Lydia . . . to the islands afar off, to them that have not heard of me and have not seen my glory. And they shall declare my glory to the Gentiles, and they shall bring all your brethren out of all nations for a gift to the Lord.*[3]

Countless ships of Christian nations plow through seas and oceans, and touch every continent and island "ad insulas longe" to the extremity of the world. They subject peoples, bring them to a sort of civilization, and demand tribute. How much better if they would spend some of this energy in the service of the Church. They should demand of all people the

[1] Psalms xviii. 7. [2] Isaias lx. 8, 9. [3] Isaias lx. 12.

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tribute of faith and obedience to Jesus Christ, and subject all men to His sweet yoke. They should carry them that true, Christian civilization, through which alone people may be said to be cultured, and ensure their future stability, as the same prophet says, *For the nation and the kingdom that will not serve thee, shall perish, and the Gentiles shall be wasted with desolation.*[1]

Wherever a conqueror, a soldier, or a merchant goes, there should be found an apostle. For he has a greater right to seek the moral conquest of a people than an earthly conqueror has to their goods. The former goes into the house of another where his presence is not desired, while the apostle enters with the divine commission of Him who is Conqueror of the universe.

This power to propagate the religion of Christ among all people is also universal in regard to time. So long as the great design of God has not been accomplished, so long as all nations have not bowed their heads to the Cross, so long as Christ is not known and loved as King of the Universe, a living apostolate will always continue in the Church. "The Holy City of God," wrote the immortal Leo XIII, "which is the Church, since she can be bounded by no country or countries, has received from her Founder the strength to grow larger day by day, and thus multiply her churches through the length and breadth of the earth." And the Church, as we have said from the beginning, from the day on which this great mission was confided to her, has never ceased to develop, and spread her tents in new lands.

[1] Isaias lx. 12.

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It will now be interesting to see how far she has progressed with this supreme work of evangelizing the world, and, in order not to transgress the limits of the subject that is before me, I will confine myself to the study of the progress made by the Catholic apostolate during the last century.

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Chapter II

PRESENT CONDITION OF THE APOSTOLATE

Let your faith be announced in the entire world.
***Rom.* i. 18.**

LET us give a rapid glance at the splendid progress of the apostolate during the last century. Many things have brought it about, and we should note above all that the missions owe their development and increase, and indeed their very existence, to that noble work known the world over as *The Propagation of the Faith.*[1]

On account of the wars and misfortunes during the closing years of the eighteenth century, which brought such desolation to the Church, and because of the suppression of so many religious houses which had furnished the missions already existing with workers, the apostolate, at the beginning of the last century, far from thinking of new conquest, was scarcely able to hold the lands already occupied. How different is the condition of things to-day! If we make a comparison between the condition of the missions at the beginning of the nineteenth century and that of to-day, we are encouraged by the bright prospects for the future.

Let us start with ASIA. In *India* during the year 1800, there were 475,000 Catholics, 2 archbishops, 2

[1] The Lyons (France) Society for the Propagation of the Faith, founded in 1822.

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bishops, and 2 vicars apostolic. To-day there are 2,311,000 Catholics, 35 archbishops and bishops, 3 prefects apostolic, and 2,894 priests. After this comes *Indo-China*, which includes Burmah, Cambodia, Cochin China, Siam, Malacca, and Tonkin. In the year 1800 in all these regions there were not more than 319,000 Catholics. To-day in Indo-China we find 1,121,122 Catholics, 17 bishops, and 1,397 priests.

China, with her 450,000,000 inhabitants, in 1800 had but 5 poor missions, and the Catholics there were reduced to 202,000. To-day in China we have 1 diocese, 48 vicariates, and 1 prefecture apostolic, respectively governed by 50 bishops and 1 prefect apostolic. In China there are to-day 1,859,883 Catholics, 1,432 missionaries, 865 native priests, 1,994 nuns, and about 8,736 catechists. Besides these there are some 10,000 churches and chapels and 85 seminaries. *Japan*, which once numbered over 2,000,000 Catholics, had been closed to missionaries after terrible persecutions, for three hundred years, so that in 1860 there was not one Catholic who openly professed his faith. To-day Japan counts 162,212 Catholics, 4 bishops, 2 vicars apostolic, and 223 missionaries.

Let us now cross over to AFRICA, where our review will be more summary. In *Northern Africa* one hundred years ago there were about 15,000 Catholics, and hardly a priest. On the eastern coast the old Portuguese settlements were merely existing in 1840, and in Eastern Africa there was but one bishopric, that of St. Paul of Loanda, with eight or ten priests. *Southern Africa* was closed to the mis-

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sionaries till 1850, and it was only in the year 1839 that M. De Jacobis could set foot in Abyssinia. What a different spectacle to-day in Africa, where we find 14 dioceses, 72 vicariates and prefectures apostolic, 3,523 missionaries, and 2,896,105 Catholics.

Now for AMERICA. Let us confine ourselves to Canada and the United States. In the year 1800 in *Canada and Newfoundland* there were but 1 bishop, 1 vicar apostolic, and 137,000 Catholics. To-day in these two countries there are 42 bishops, 4,937 priests and 3,024,176 Catholics.

One word about the *United States.* In no other country has Catholicism made such remarkable progress as in this great republic, which extends from the Atlantic to the Pacific. In 1800, in all this territory there were only one bishop, Mgr. Carroll, the first bishop of Baltimore, and not more than twenty priests in charge of about 36,000 Catholics. To-day we find 106 archbishops and bishops, 2 vicars apostolic, 20,477 priests, and 17,416,303 Catholics.

We will now pass to OCEANIA. In the year 1800 not a priest was to be found in *Australia and Polynesia.* To-day in *Australia* alone, with a population of 4,455,005, there are 984,192 Catholics, 22 bishops and vicars apostolic, and 1,143 missionaries. In Polynesia the first missionaries appeared in 1838. Now that vast archipelago which includes *New Zealand, the Caroline, Fiji, Marquesas Islands, New Guinea, New Pomerania, Caledonia, etc.*, is divided into 9 vicariates apostolic and 3 prefectures, with 276,794 Catholics and 608 missionaries.

Let us now glance at the principal Protestant

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countries of Europe. In 1800 there were in *England* 4 bishops and vicars apostolic, and over 90,000 Catholics. In the nineteenth century Catholicism gained a new foothold. The hierarchy was re-established, and to-day in England alone there are 14 bishops, 3,784 priests, and 1,885,000 Catholics. In *Scotland* there has been less progress, but it is, however, encouraging. In 1800 there were 2 vicars apostolic, 22 priests, and 30,000 faithful. To-day there are 6 bishops, 756 priests, and 546,000 Catholics. It is difficult to determine the Catholic population of *Holland* at the beginning of the nineteenth century. To-day we have the following authentic report: 5 bishops, 3,707 priests, and 2,053,021 Catholics, about two-fifths of the entire population. Now for *Germany*. In 1800 there were in Germany 6,000,000 Catholics; in 1910 there were 23,821,453 without counting the one and one-half millions of the Catholic provinces of Alsace and Lorraine, which were annexed after the War of '70. Therefore the Catholics of Germany have almost quadrupled.

We should note also that, with the exception of Russia, in all Protestant countries, the laws against Catholics have been generally abrogated. If the Church continues to enjoy, not privileges, but what is her common right, she will reclaim little by little all the territory lost to her during centuries of heresy, and she will extend her influence even to lands now uninhabited. It is, however, necessary that there shall be no lack of vocations, and that Catholics shall recognize their obligation to assist by generous contributions such Mission Aid Societies as *The Propagation of the Faith.* Then the Church will be able to

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make great strides. The past is a good omen of the future.

From the cold but eloquent figures given above, we gather that the nineteenth century has been one of great progress for the Church. At the beginning of the new century the work of conquest proceeds with equal zeal and success. Yet there are those who say that the Catholic Church is dying out. What human society or what country can boast of greater expansion and development than that which the Catholic Church has made, with the poor human means at her disposal during the last century. Mons. Gastaldi, Archbishop of Turin, referring to the evident progress, says: "Any one who had the honor to sit in the Vatican Council in the year 1870, could recognize a wonderful demonstration of the catholicity and the progress of our Church; eighty missionary bishops who had come from distant countries, from the most uncivilized parts of the world, from the most remote islands, where before the foundation of the work of *The Propagation of the Faith* (1822) our holy religion had not yet been made known. And all this in less than fifty years!"

The Catholic Church instead of decaying is now enjoying her youth. She will have lost her strength and have fallen into decay only when she has accomplished her divine mission, that is, when she will have conducted all the people of the world to the feet of Christ. And when will that be?

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Chapter III

THE NUMBER AND CONDITION OF THOSE OUTSIDE THE CHURCH

They will see how sad it is that so many men redeemed by Jesus Christ should run headlong to eternal ruin.

Leo XIII, Enc.
"*Ex eunte jam anno.*"

After admiring the bright side of the picture in which we have tried to show the progress of the Church, let us now turn to the darker side. How much more work is there to be done? To-day — two thousand years after the coming of Christ — which are more numerous on this earth, the children of light or the children of darkness? Over how many hearts does Christ not yet hold sway?

Sad indeed is the answer to these very important questions. According to the most recent statistics, there are 1,600,000,000 people in the whole world, and of these not more than 300,000,000 are Catholics! Counting a great number who, though schismatics and heretics, belong to the soul of the Church, we find that there are more than 1,000,000,000 who have not yet shared in the merits of the Redemption. Here are a few figures. India, with her 300,000,000 inhabitants, has but 2,311,000 Catholics. In Indo-China we have seen that there are 1,121,122 Catholics, but the Pagans number 41,000,000. China has also about 1,859,883, but she boasts of 447,000,000

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Pagans. In the whole of Africa there are about 2,896,105 Catholics, but altogether there are nearly 200,000,000 inhabitants. Every man of faith should be startled at these appalling figures. Two thousand years after the Redemption, how many souls still lie in the darkness and the shades of death!

And the spectacle becomes still more desolate if we peer into this profound darkness and learn something of the savagery, dejection and misery of this immense mass of poor souls. In place of the true God, who is adored? *And they changed the glory of the incorruptible God, into the likeness of the image of a corruptible man, and of birds, and four footed beasts, and of creeping things.*[1] Millions and millions of men lie prostrate every day before these fantastic and monstrous idols which *have eyes, and see not; have ears, and hear not:* senseless adorers of insensible gods! And their priests are worthy representatives of such gods. The Holy Ghost, using the mouth of St. Paul, has given us a description of these also. *Being filled with all iniquity, malice, fornication, covetousness, wickedness, full of envy, murder, contention, deceit, malignity, whisperers, detractors, hateful to God, contumelious, proud, haughty inventors of evil things . . .*[2]

What of the moral degradation in which this immense population lies? *It was not sufficient,* says the Holy Spirit, *for the Gentiles to err in regard to the knowledge of God, but whereas they lived in a great war of ignorance, they call so many and so great evils peace. For either they sacrifice their own children, or use hidden sacrifices, or keep watches full of mad-*

[1] Rom. i. 23. [2] Rom. i. 29, 30.

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ness, so that now they neither keep life nor marriage undefiled, but one killeth another through envy, or grieveth him by adultery. And all things are mingled together, blood, murder, theft and dissimulation, corruption, and unfaithfulness, tumults and perjury, disquieting of the good; forgetfulness of God, defiling of souls, changing of nature, disorder in marriage, and the irregularity of adultery, and uncleanness. For the worship of abominable idols is the cause, and the beginning and end of all evil. For either they are mad when they are merry; or they prophesy lies, or they live unjustly, or easily forswear themselves.[1]

The citation above is a long one, but it is a faithful picture of the present condition of the pagan world, painted by the hand of God.

Let us go into a few particulars. We may transport ourselves in spirit across the sea, and first visit the numerous islands of Oceania. The inhabitants of these islands, who up to the present have not participated in the Redemption, are the slaves of barbarous customs and the most disgraceful habits. They wander through the forests, engaged in continuous warfare, and bow down before insensible idols; sons of God, who have yet fresh upon their souls His image, and the imprint of His divine hands, profane His holy name, and give that name which belongs to God alone, to the vilest and most insensible of His creatures. These men, ignorant of the Sacred Scriptures, without shame or remorse, offer to the spirits of darkness sacrifices which should be offered to God alone.

[1] Wisdom xiv. 22–28.

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In the wide expanses of China and India, idolatry, superstition, and the most ancient prejudices hold the souls of men under a yoke so stubborn that it makes one despair to think of it. In the other parts of Asia we find that Mohammedanism is now enthroned upon the ruins of the once flourishing churches of Constantinople, Smyrna, and Ephesus, where the kingdom of pleasure and sensuality has been founded upon the miserable dreams of an impostor. What a subject for the immense piety and zeal of the missionary! What an extensive field for the exercise of his boundless charity!

If we turn our attention to Africa, we find that her condition must be painted in still darker colors. Let it suffice to say that wherever the life-giving light of the gospel has not penetrated, in the moral order they live as in a world without a sun. A secret fear seems to dominate the souls of men. The holy and joyous liberty that was brought to us by the Son of God, and the unspeakable peace of conscience, are unknown. A servile fear keeps the lower classes in subjection, justice may be bought or sold at will, fraud and vice are common, and sweet charity is a flower that is seldom seen.

Contemplating such miseries and abominations, the heart of the missionary naturally burns with indignation and with zeal to better the deplorable condition in which he finds so many people buried. He has the same experience that St. Paul had in Athens: *Now whilst Paul waited for them at Athens his spirit was stirred within him, seeing the city wholly given to idolatry.*[1]

[1] Acts xvii. 16.

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And it was in the face of a similar picture that the heart of our Divine Saviour burst forth in that pitiful lamentation: *And seeing the multitudes, He had compassion on them because they were distressed, and lying like sheep that have no shepherd. Then He saith to His disciples, The harvest is indeed great, but the laborers are few.*[1]

The missionary weeps over such conditions, but he bows his head and adores the inscrutable designs of God, as he genuflects before his Jesus, so humiliated under the Sacred Species, but still more so in the poor little chapel of mud and straw, the only habitation which he can offer his God. Still greater is his sorrow when he considers, on the other hand, that, a short distance away, his neighbors have erected to the evil spirit rich and showy pagodas which almost defy heaven as they rise into the skies, glittering with gold among the green palm trees. Well for him that he has learned the lessons of Bethlehem, of Calvary, and of the Altar; and yet when he gazes at the grand temples, or witnesses the fantastic and pompous processions of idols (before whom thousands of poor people become frantic); when he sees the incense rising or hears the songs of priests and the shrill cries of victims beheaded before horrible images, he is forced to cry out, "O Lord, Thou hast said, *I will not give my glory to another,*[2] and behold, the devil receives divine honors and to him are given more incense and more profound adoration than to Thee. Why should this be?" *Oh the depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God!*

[1] Matt. ix. 36, 37.
[2] Isaias xlii. 8.

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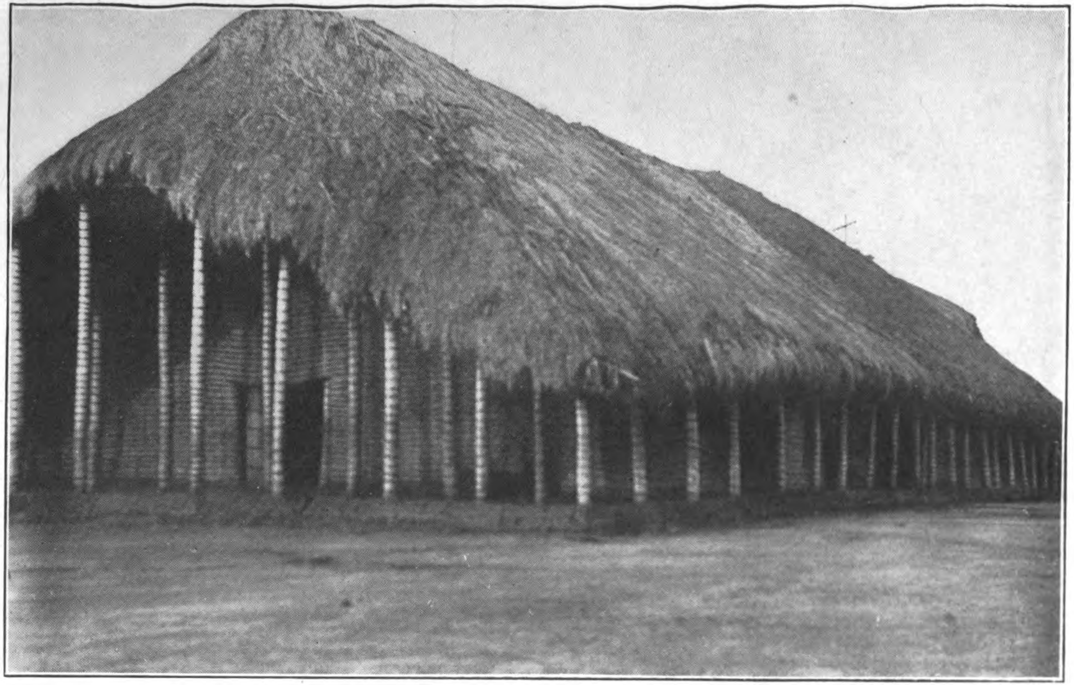

Cathedral, Uganda, British East Africa

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How incomprehensible are His judgments, and how unsearchable His ways.[1]

If our priests could only witness the horrors and the abominations of idolatry, the most villifying superstitions, the eating of human flesh, slavery, infanticide, and thousands of other evils, material and spiritual; if they would only reflect more at length on the words of the apostle, *As it is now revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the spirit, that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs of the same body, and co-partners of His promise in Christ Jesus by the Gospel,*[2] then more would be moved to assist these poor creatures and many more souls would be saved.

Father Mazzucchelli, an old Milanese missionary, who has exercised a most fruitful apostolate among the North American Indians, writes as follows: "One of the principal reasons why more people do not consecrate themselves to the apostolate, is lack of reflection, on the part of the clergy of Catholic countries, on the deplorable condition of those nations that have not yet received the sacred truths of our holy religion. Many priests, born and educated in the Faith, are not in a position to experience the agony and the grief one feels who witnesses the spiritual massacre which is the inevitable result of ignorance of the Faith. If they knew and appreciated the gift of being born amid the abundance of God's spiritual riches, of being able to sit daily at His Eucharistic Banquet, of visiting at will the house of the Lord, of always having at hand the divine

[1] Rom. xi. 33.
[2] Eph. iii. 5.

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remedies that cure the infirmities of soul, while so many poor people are deprived of these blessings, they would be filled with greater zeal, and they would be content not only to compassionate from a distance the miseries of others, but to put their own hands to the plow, ever mindful of that command of Christ, *Going therefore teach ye all nations.*"[1]

[1] Matt. xxviii. 19.

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Chapter IV

THE PROBLEM OF THE CONVERSION OF THE HEATHEN

How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? Or how shall they believe Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? *Rom.* x. 14.

Let us turn now to the study of this difficult problem. Why are so many millions untaught? Was Christ's death useless? Must the Divine Saviour say to us, *What profit is there in my blood?* [1] I have *labored in vain, I have spent my strength without cause and in vain?* [2]

No! The coming of Christianity into the world is undoubtedly the most dominant fact in all human history. No human power could ever have brought it about. It must have had a divine origin. It began in a stable, had for apostles a few illiterate men, and made marvelous strides notwithstanding the opposition and difficulties which beset its path on all sides. To-day it is being developed and propagated under our very eyes by an invincible power, that same mysterious power which characterized the first years of its existence.

How is it then that such a small part of the world is Christianized? We are told it is a mystery of divine grace and we respect the mysteries of God. We know *He that is a searcher of majesty, shall be*

[1] Psalms xxix. 10. [2] Isaias xlix. 4.

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overwhelmed by glory,[1] and we know that two thousand years in the sight of God are not more than one second of His never-ending Eternity. *A thousand years in Thy sight are as yesterday which is past.*[2] It has been said that for these boundless pagan countries the hour of conversion is not yet come. These and many other explanations have been offered. Two facts, however, always remain. First, our Lord is neither known nor loved nor served by the majority of mankind; second, every day there are men and women dying outside the Church, and hence many souls are lost, for it is true now as always, that *Without faith it is impossible to please God,*[3] and *Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*[4]

It would seem that this problem of the conversion of the heathen is one that admits of a partial solution. It is not such a mystery that we cannot look into it with some hope of success. Once a man is ordained and authorized by the Church to preach the gospel, and to administer the sacraments, through which are applied to men the merits of the Redemption, he must take to himself those words of Christ, *Preach . . . baptize.* Our Lord, therefore, has honored us with His most profound confidence, entrusting to us this magnificent mission which is but a continuation of His own. He wished in His wisdom that the salvation of the world should be from the very beginning to the end, a work of love and of sacrifice. *I have loved with an infinite love,* and I have preferred you to so

[1] Prov. xxv. 27.
[2] Psalms lxxxix. 4.
[3] Heb. xi. 6.
[4] John iii. 5.

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many others. Now I desire from you an exchange of love. Occupy yourself now for love of Me in the noble work of saving your less fortunate brothers. *Other sheep I have that are not of this fold.*[1] Go seek them out and lead them back to Me because *There shall be one fold and one shepherd.*[1]

How have the men of these twenty centuries of Christianity responded to such a noble confidence as that which our Lord has placed in them? How do we Christians of to-day respond to such condescension on Christ's part in making us the cooperators in this great work? *For we are God's coadjutors.*[2] If we make this examination of conscience well, it will assist us in solving part of the mystery. We cannot, of course, doubt that God will help us in this work of conversion, since it is absolutely true that He *will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*[3] We must therefore conclude that the salvation of the world will be brought about in proportion to our zeal. The Gentiles can correspond to that first grace which our Lord denies to no one, but to obtain further graces, and thus bring about the salvation of their souls, our help is necessary. St. Paul makes this quite clear in the following words, *For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? Or how shall they believe him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear, without a preacher?* [4]

The conversion of the Gentiles, not considering for

[1] John x. 16.
[2] I Cor. iii. 9.
[3] I Tim. ii. 4.
[4] Rom. x. 13, 14.

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the present, correspondence on their part, depends in a great measure upon the efficacy of our co-operation, and upon our zeal for souls. Hence if our co-operation is wanting and inadequate to the great need that faces us, it may be through our laziness and want of zeal that many are deprived of the Faith.

From this you will see that the problem of the conversion of the heathen is not such a mystery after all, and that it can be solved by greater zeal on our part, and more solicitude for the salvation of others. And is not this an important matter for us to consider? Some one may ask, "Why did not Christ by a miracle bring salvation to all people? Why did He not do it all Himself (for He had the power), rather than jeopardize the outcome of His loving designs by confiding to us the completion of His mission?" To such a one I would reply with the wise and learned Leo XIII, "Where is there any ground for alleging that Jesus Christ, the guardian and champion of the Church, needs in any manner the help of men? Power certainly is not wanting to Him, but in His loving kindness He would assign us a share in obtaining and applying the fruits of salvation procured through His grace."[1]

Père Lacordaire, according to Mons. de Martino, in his valuable work on the Propagation of the Faith, gives us this exhaustive explanation: "Certainly our Lord Himself could have extended the benefits of the Redemption to every one who lives upon the earth, but by some secret counsel of His own, He did not dispose of the matter in this way. He wished this to be the

[1] Enc. *Sapientiae Christianae*, 1890.

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work of centuries and desired to call as many as possible to be co-operators with Him in the accomplishment of our Redemption.

"In God's relations with men He has sown the seed and left men to cultivate it. Consequently He has called us to co-operate in His own work. God indeed has done everything necessary on His part, and He has called all of us to be co-partners in His labors. He has committed to our energy the development of His works, and He has chosen this way because if He had done everything Himself, He would have left nothing for us to do; and if He had left nothing for us to do, it would be useless for us to live. In the Creation we had no part. In the Redemption, on the contrary, He only laid the foundation. He built that which He alone could build, and afterwards left to us the completion through our own labors. This idea is expressed by St. Paul, when he says *For we are the co-workers of God.*"[1]

Canon Planus, in a recent discourse (1903) on the same subject — The Propagation of the Faith — touches chiefly on this point. With the faith of a Christian, and the mental acumen of a deep thinker, he tries to give us a practical solution of this grave problem which we are now considering. "I cannot forget," he says, "the words of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. *And other sheep I have that are not of this fold. Them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd.*[2]

"Has this declaration, this promise, this prophecy

[1] Discorso sull' Opera della Propagazione della Fede.
[2] John x. 16.

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of our Lord been already realized? No. Therefore it behooves us to bring about its confirmation, its realization; not at some later time, for to say that would be to shirk the work. When then will it be accomplished? This is an impertinent and superfluous question, for our Lord has said, *It is not for you to know the times or moments which the Father hath put in His own power.*[1] It naturally arouses our curiosity, but our finite intellects are overtaxed when we try to fathom the length of time assigned by Divine Providence for the evolution of the human race on this earth. We are inclined to believe by some sort of presentiment that this evolution is nearing completion.

"Now what authority have we to think so? Is it based upon Sacred Scripture? No, Scripture says very clearly, on the contrary, that this is a secret. The first Christians who misunderstood the idea of the *kingdom* announced by Jesus Christ, were deceived by their own false suppositions. As the year 1000 approached, the terror which dominated those unhappy times caused people to believe that the end of the world was at hand. They were deceived for the second time. Is it not possible that they are likewise deceived who permit themselves to compute the number of years and of centuries that will have elapsed before the pilgrimage of the human race here below is accomplished? We are apt to think that this is the afternoon of the Evangelical Day, when perhaps its morning is just beginning. Even among nations favored with the Faith, how many blessings of the Saviour have still to become effective. And

[1] Acts i. 7.

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this is much more true of those regions that till now have been deprived of the blessing of Almighty God. Will any one say that they are condemned never to know or experience this blessing? Away then with our miserable prophecies and forebodings of the future! We prefer rather to think and hope that, up to the present, only the first links of the chain of time have been welded, and that a long future is still awaiting the world, and in this future will be fully confirmed and realized the promises made by our Lord.

"How will these promises be confirmed and accomplished? How will the progressive conquest of Christianity be brought about? No one knows. But if we consider only the most populous of the continents, Asia for example, may we not look for a diffusion of the Christian faith equal and proportionate to the material progress which has opened up the East and the West? With railroads traversing Siberia and the Caucasus, joining Pekin with St. Petersburg and Paris, crossing Thibet and the Himalayas, one can easily go from the extreme north to the extreme south of Asia. When commerce and industry, scientific and literary culture, making such inroads, shall rouse these nations, Christianity also, carried there by apostles of the Faith, will be more easily extended to the most distant shores of the Pacific. Did the ancient Romans, as they marked out Gaul with beautiful, smoothly paved streets, destined for the use of their victorious legions, ever suspect that the conquerors of the Faith, men like Irenæus of Lyons, Martin of Tours, St. Boniface of Germany, and St. Augustine of England, would travel by these same highways,

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preaching the Gospel of Christ, and thus plant the Cross in the entire West? Is not the silent progress made by our holy religion during the last century due in great part to the improved means of communication offered the missionaries of to-day, and to the penetration of Europeans into almost every country of the globe?

"Is it Utopian to think that these two great nations, England and Russia, which were so unfortunately cut off from the Catholic Church, one twelve centuries, the other four hundred years ago, will one day return to the unity of the Faith which they have misunderstood and disrupted? Has there not been above all in England, in the old Isle of Saints, a return to the Church that hardly seemed possible? If one day Russia and England should come back to the unity of the true Faith, and unite for the extension of the Church, who does not see the wonderful effect this would have for the Christian transformation of the world?"

But perhaps you will say that this is merely a development of my imagination, some vain fantasy. Perhaps you prefer to prophesy the ruin of the work of Christ on earth, and the triumph of irreligion. We, on the other hand, who know that the gospel is immortal, and that the Church will not perish, hope and pray with confidence for the arrival of new triumphs. These hopes confirm what we said about the necessity of our co-operation in the work of the propagation of the faith, and make clear the grave and binding obligation of all who love Christ, to awaken, to pray, and to labor, in order to obtain the conversion of the poor heathen. When I consider the

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miserable condition, material and moral, in which so many people lie, I would cry out with a voice as loud as thunder, to make myself heard by all Christians, but especially by young ecclesiastics, "Faithful souls, see what a harvest there is still to be gathered! Why do you sleep? See how many poor heathen there are yet to be saved! *Go, ye swift angels, to a nation rent and torn in pieces . . . to a nation expecting and trodden under foot.*[1] If you cannot, then *Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He send forth laborers into his harvest.*"[2] We have faith, yes, firm and unshaken faith in the divine mission of the Church. We have faith also in the divine promise of Christ, *And this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world, for a testimony to all nations.*[3] Faith, however, is not sufficient, but if we really have faith, it will move us to action. Lamentations and complaints do no good. Prayer alone is not enough. The world must go to Christ, and it is we priests called by Him to the ministry, who should lead it to Him. We should realize this truth in a practical manner, and do something for the conquest of the nations who are the heirs of Christ. *I will give thee the Gentiles for thy inheritance.*[4] We should work with the resolute spirit of Caleb, when he exhorted the Jews towards the conquest of the Promised Land. *Let us go up and possess the land, for we shall be able to conquer it.*[5] In like manner let us co-operate for the practical solution of this grave problem, and our Lord will surely do the rest.

[1] Isaias xviii. 2. [2] Matt. ix. 38. [3] Matt. xxiv. 14.
[4] Psalms ii. 8. [5] Numbers xiii. 31.

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CHAPTER V

THE APOSTOLATE TO-DAY

Behold I say to you, lift up your eyes and see the countries, for they are white already to harvest. *John* iv. 35.

For a great door and evident is opened unto me: and many adversaries. *I Cor.* xvi. 9.

FATHER MONSABRÉ has very wisely distinguished three periods in the work of the apostolate. After centuries of slow preparation and fearful expectation, the Messiah came to bring redemption and safety to the human race. Then in a short time Christianity was first announced and promulgated to the entire world. Hardly had the apostles received the Holy Spirit when, obedient to the divine command, they dispersed throughout the world in order to preach the gospel. *But they going forth preached everywhere,*[1] so that only twenty years after the death of Jesus Christ, St. Paul, in writing to the Romans, was able to say, *Your faith is spoken of in the whole world.*[2]

On the day of Pentecost, the apostolic epoch of the propagation of the gospel began. This epoch embraces the first three centuries of the Church, and ends with the promulgation of the Edict of Constantine, during whose reign the era of persecution came to an end, and the new religion enjoyed peace

[1] Mark xvi. 20. [2] Rom. i. 8.

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and liberty. In this first period of the foundation of the Church, our Blessed Lord in a very special manner gave His divine assistance to the preachers of the gospel. *The Lord working withal and confirming the word with signs that followed.*[1]

This first epoch was followed by one of Union and Protectorate. It was the period which brought, besides the assistance of Almighty God, help from earthly rulers. These rulers might be called secondary causes of the conservation and propagation of the Faith throughout the world. During this period the spiritual and temporal powers of the world were united to establish the kingdom of Jesus Christ, but unfortunately the Revolution of the eighteenth century put an end to this long period of peace and concord. Worldly powers took away from the Church their support and protection, and thus began an era of persecution and spoliation. They believed that they could thus destroy the Church, but they were deceived, for she came forth from this time of trial stronger and more beautiful than ever, just as she had done before, even from the bloody persecution of Roman emperors.

Then came what is called the modern or popular epoch, that in which we now live. The conquests made by the Faith in the nineteenth century, the first century of this popular epoch, are a clear proof of this assertion. We call this modern epoch popular, because the preaching of the Gospel is effected to-day without the help and protection of Christian princes, who, if they sometimes protected the missionaries, did so usually for political rather than for re-

[1] Mark xvi. 20.

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ligious reasons. It is also called popular for another reason. When the princes of the various countries withdrew their help from the missions, our Lord substituted for this the charity of the faithful.

Let us now consider this modern epoch of the propagation of the Faith. While it is true that the apostolate is the work of all times, yet there are many reasons for describing it in a particular manner, as the work of our day. Our Lord works always, but there are certain times when He manifests greater mercy, shows a deeper affection, and gives more help to His co-operators, and at such times His work progresses more rapidly. Never was the opportunity more favorable than now for the expansion of the kingdom of Jesus Christ and never did the Church work with greater success for that end than to-day. It really would seem that our Lord cries out to us with a thousand voices, *Lift up your eyes, and see the countries, for they are white already to harvest.*[1] Everything seems to favor the preaching of the Gospel among the faithful, giving ground for hope that in the near future we shall have an abundant harvest of souls to gather in every country of the globe. Our Lord Himself shows us this by granting to numerous souls grace to enroll themselves among the volunteers of the Gospel. On every side the material obstacles that, up to the present, stood in the way of the spread of faith, are destroyed, while the means of expansion are being multiplied. It would be a fatal mistake not to take advantage of the favorable circumstances which Providence now gives us to accomplish its lofty and most merciful designs. The world

[1] John iv. 35.

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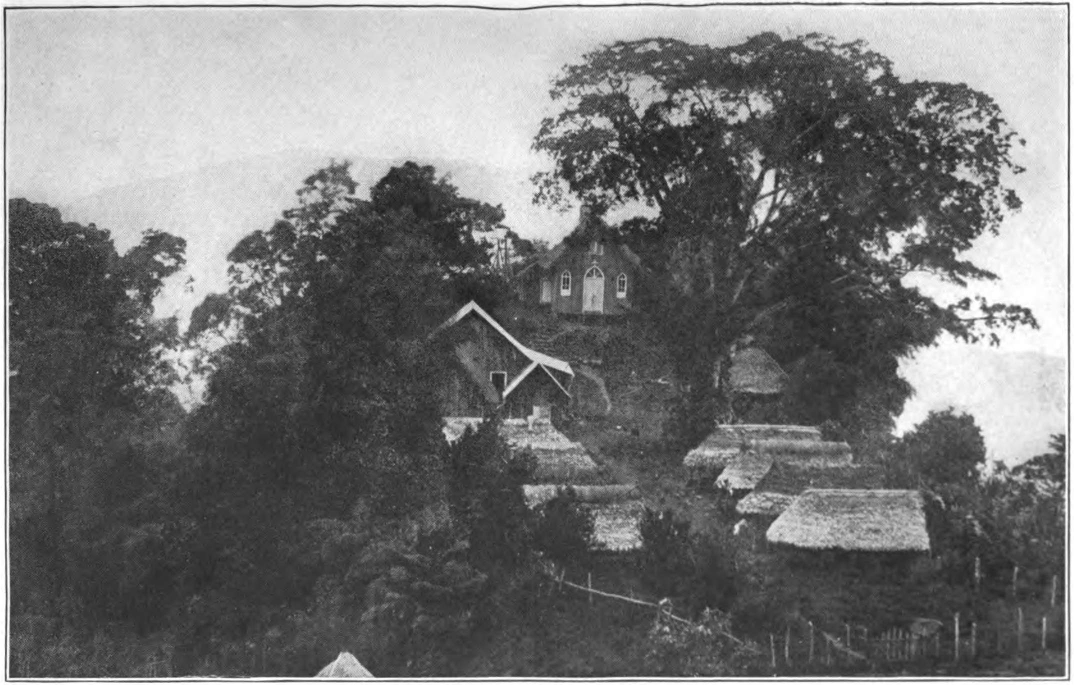

Typical Mission in Papua, Oceania

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is opening its gates to civilization. It is the duty of the Church to enter with the Gospel.

The Bishop of Sion, in one of his pastoral letters, thus describes the work of the apostolate up to the present time: "The circumstances which our times present are most favorable for good results from the labors of the modern apostles and indicate great progress of the Faith in the future. The awakening of apostolic zeal, the disappearance of many obstacles that hitherto stood in the way, the facility of travel and communication, the good disposition of the people, are many circumstances which show us rich harvests in the near future. The awakening of zeal for the mission work is manifested in the ardor which inflames Religious Orders to offer themselves for the preaching of the Gospel to the heathen. This same zeal appears equally strong in the hearts of the secular priests who, up to the present, have not taken a very large share in this sublime calling. The self-same zeal is being communicated to thousands of virgins who are consecrating their lives to God. To-day a great number of Religious of various Orders leave Europe and make new homes in the lands that are inhabited by heathens and barbarians, in order to assist the apostolic work of the missionaries and to insure the success of its outcome. This extraordinary interest in missions, which is the effect of divine inspiration, tends evidently to fulfill the most merciful designs of God, by which He wishes that all men shall be brought to a knowledge of the truth.

"Many obstacles have been placed in the way of the propagation of the Gospel and have rendered vain

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the labors of the missionaries. The implacable hatred that separates one people from another, the invincible differences that exist among them, the extreme diversity of manners and customs, the unchangeable character of their legislation were other obstacles that impeded the missionaries from penetrating the vast empires of the East, where trials, sufferings, persecutions, and sometimes martyrdom itself, awaited them. Little by little, however, differences of opinion disappeared, hatred was overcome, manners and customs became more alike, and laws less inhuman; in a word, the people were reconciled with one another. May we not suppose that the treaties made with countries, which up to the present were closed to European influence, and the internal disruptions that caused such agitation in China, were perhaps brought about by Divine Providence in order to destroy the bulwarks and the barriers that oppose the entrance of the gospel into these vast territories? We have another circumstance which helps to carry out the counsel of our Lord, in the present dispositions of the heathen, for they seem to be less averse and even favorable to the Catholic faith. Therefore among Pagans and Protestants, Catholic missionaries and Sisters are the object of admiration and respect. These dispositions toward the Catholic religion give great and encouraging hope for the future progress of the Faith."[1]

In a similar strain Bishop Dupanloup wrote: "Who does not see that on all sides distances are being shortened? God shortens the road, and lengthens the steps of man. All civilized people feel the neces-

[1] Annali della Prop. della Fede, 1857.

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sity of greater inter-communication. The steamboat and the railroad have made progress much more rapid than formerly. The persistence of a Frenchman hastened the opening of the Suez Canal. Another is responsible for the Panama Canal, and there is even talk to-day of making a canal through the Malay peninsula. Now, who will be so rash as to say that all these barriers have been broken down and that these modern means of bringing people nearer together have been effected merely that they may be better enabled to exterminate their neighbors? Who would say that all these things have been done for the sole reason of transporting merchandise and passengers from one point of the globe to another? Such a motive is unbecoming the dignity of Europe. Moreover, these things do not suffice for the true prosperity of a nation. If to-day travel has been so facilitated, if our words and thoughts can be carried across the continent with greater rapidity than that of light, I cannot believe that the thoughts and counsels of Divine Providence are not to be considered in this modern progress, and that great things are not being prepared for the future; not for that future that exists only in the dreams of Utopians, but for the days to come that have been divinely appointed and prophesied, for the times and good tidings that are expected, for the triumph of the great principles of right and of Eternal Justice, for the peaceful propagation of the Faith, and Christian civilization. The gates of the East are opened to the light of the gospel. *For a great door and evident is opened unto me.*" [1]

[1] I Cor. xvi. 9.

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The East is open and wide and evident, according to the Gospel. To-day the powerful hand of the West has opened all the gates of the East. To-day, as never before, the ancient oracle is verified. *May God enlarge Japheth, and may he dwell in the tents of Sem, and Chanaan be his servant.*[1] Europe, it is true, in her invasion of the East, and with her colonies throughout the entire world, has brought about nothing but temporal advantages. God, who guides the footsteps of nations, will use this material progress for the completion of His holy designs in regard to innumerable people who are to-day not walking upon the path of salvation.

Young ecclesiastics! There was a time in history when one idea, that of the liberation of the Holy Sepulchre, could inflame thousands of hearts with zeal, and call into service innumerable volunteers. Would that those times of faith were here now! Who will give me the eloquence of a Peter the Hermit, or of a St. Bernard, in order that with the same eagerness and willingness men may respond to the Christ of to-day; to the grand but peaceful Christ of the propagation of the Faith among the heathen; to the wholly spiritual Christ; for the conquest of the entire world? Is not the salvation of a single soul of more value than even the liberation of the sepulchre of Christ? The ardent energy with which the Church has been inflamed and set on fire by the Heart of her Divine Founder, urges her irresistibly and at all times to increase the number of her tabernacles, and to make greater conquests of souls. The world belongs to him who will lay hold

[1] Gen. ix. 27.

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of it. It is our duty, therefore, to conquer it for Christ. *For He must reign.*[1] The Church will never fail in her divine mission of procuring the salvation of all mankind, since for all men her Divine Founder died. To-day, perhaps, more ardently than ever, does the Mother of the family feel herself moved by the noble ambition of multitudes of her children.

Our Holy Father, Leo XIII, consecrated the entire Church to the Divine Heart of Jesus, excluding no one, neither sinners, nor heretics, nor infidels. He presented them all to Christ, and prayed that He would reign over them all. Beautiful and touching is the prayer (a paraphrase of the words of the Our Father, *Thy kingdom come*) "We are Thine and Thine we wish to be. Many there are who have never known Thee, many who, heeding not Thy divine commands, have repudiated Thee. Have mercy on them all, most benign Jesus; draw all mankind to Thy Sacred Heart. Thou art king, O Lord, not only of the faithful, but also of Thy prodigal sons who have abandoned Thee. Be Thou king of those whom error has deceived, or discord separated from Thee. Be Thou king, finally, of those who have fallen into the ancient superstitions of the Gentiles. Lead them out of darkness lest they be deprived of the light of the kingdom of God."

In order to obtain the realization of this prayer, the Church has need of soldiers, she has need of preachers of the Divine Word, she has need of a holy apostolate, filled with courage and zeal for the salvation of souls. Our Lord is anxious to shower His grace upon those outside the Church. The hearts

[1] I Cor. xv. 25.

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of nations are throbbing in expectation, their angels are praying, "O Luminary of the Heavens, Splendor of Eternal Light, and Sun of Justice, come and illumine those who sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death." [1] The waves are surging to and fro, and the winds are blowing hither and thither impatient to carry the ministers of peace to the most distant shores of the earth, but who will respond to the invitation? *I heard the voice of the Lord saying: Whom shall I send, and who shall go for us?* [2] Generous hearts will respond, *Here am I, send me.*[2]

[1] Roman Breviary.
[2] Isaias vi. 8.

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Chapter VI

THE SCARCITY OF WORKERS

The harvest indeed is great but the laborers are few.
Matt. **ix. 37.**

Think of it! There is question of more than 1,000,000,000 neglected souls. We have pointed out that through prayer and the charity of the faithful, and with a larger number of evangelical workers, we can arrive at the practical solution of the great problem of Christianizing the world. We have also glanced at the possibility of success which the present moment offers to the apostolate. From both considerations, one great and serious conclusion follows — we need prayers, we need missions, but there is an especial need of missionaries.

It is not sufficient to know the causes of the evil, nor does it suffice to be acquainted with the remedies, if these causes be not removed and these remedies be not applied. It is necessary that Christianity shall realize more and more her great obligation towards such a large part of the world, now wrapped in the darkness of error. We must be ready and willing to offer our work and ourselves. Each of us must help according to his ability. As long as we priests content ourselves with merely teaching the value of an immortal soul, showing that one soul is equal in value to the blood of Christ, and that its loss is more to be deplored than the ruin of the entire

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world, the heathen will continue to be lost. We must pray, and at the same time generously give to others the means of doing what we ourselves, for special reasons, are not able to do. I base my appeal only upon the necessity of apostolic workers, which seems to me to be the principal necessity at present. Christ explicitly commanded us to pray for these: *Pray ye therefore the Lord of the Harvest, that he send forth laborers into his harvest.*[1] I will never tire of repeating "WE WANT MISSIONARIES," for, *How shall they believe him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?*[2] Everything is reduced to this.

Leo XIII, in his celebrated encyclical "The Holy City of God," speaking of the work of the propagation of the faith, has most eloquently pointed out the Church's great need of valiant missionaries. The authoritative words of this great Pope, true in the year 1880, are still more true to-day when the violent hurricane that has swept over France has proscribed and suppressed so many congregations which were a source of supply for numberless, noble champions in the work of the foreign missions.

"The apostolic missions are greatly handicapped in the fulfillment of their work because of the daily decrease in the number of their workers. There are not even aspirants equal in number and character to succeed those, who, on account of death, old age, or impaired health, are forced to quit the field. We see Religious Orders that supplied many men to the sacred missions, broken up by hostile laws, clerics torn from the altar and forced to serve in the army, and besides all

[1] Matt. ix. 38. [2] Rom. x. 14.

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this, we see almost everywhere the property of both the Seculars and Religious sold at auction or confiscated.

"Meanwhile with the opening up of lands that hitherto seemed impassable, and with the growing knowledge of countries and of people, new expeditions of the Soldiers of Christ have set out and new missions opened. Hence many men are required who will devote themselves to the missions, and give timely assistance to the great work."

Here are the latest statistics from missionaries actually engaged in Asia, Africa, and Oceania:

	Inhabitants	*Missionaries*
Asia	793,000,000	5,713
Africa	200,000,000	3,523
Oceania	8,000,000	1,656

Consider *Asia.* There are, according to the above figures, 5,713 missionaries scattered over that vast continent to evangelize 793,000,000 souls. *Five thousand seven hundred and thirteen priests!* This might seem a large number, but what are 5,713 priests for 793,000,000 souls, if we consider that in the United States, for a little more than 105,000,000 inhabitants, there are over 20,000 priests? What are 5,713 missionaries for all Asia if we consider the great work they are expected to accomplish and the fact that they are scattered over a territory about five times larger than the United States? Just think of it! Five thousand seven hundred and thirteen missionaries must attend to the needs of the 105 archdioceses, dioceses, vicariates, and prefectures apostolic, in Asia, excluding Asiatic Turkey, with her seven missions. This gives us about 54 missionaries

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for every diocese or vicariate. And remember, there are vicariates like that of Kiang-Nan in China with over 50,000,000 inhabitants — almost half as many people as there are in the United States. So densely is the entire Chinese Empire populated that if one hundred were to march by a given point every minute not until eight years had elapsed would the entire army pass. In the Diocese of Allahabad, in India, there are 46,000,000 souls.

These few missionaries have the care of millions of souls, scattered over the face of this vast continent. They look after 147 seminaries, they administer to more than 18,000 churches and chapels, they supervise 391 houses of Brothers, who are occupied in teaching and hospital work, 497 houses of nuns, and more than 12,000 schools which they are obliged at least to superintend, since these schools are connected with the missions. They must attend also to 253 educational institutions for young men, more than 800 orphanages, 129 hospitals, and 194 other charitable institutions.

Then there are the procurators, the chaplains at the military stations, those in charge of printing establishments, and the infirm in hospitals. Finally, in the above number of 5,713 are included the native priests, who are rapidly increasing, owing to the multiplication of their seminaries. Therefore what do 5,713 missionaries amount to for the whole of Asia, when the largest of our American dioceses alone has about one fifth that number of priests?

Let us ask another question. How many of these 5,713 missionaries, including the bishops, can dedicate themselves exclusively to the direct conversion of the

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heathen? Very few. They seem to work at the extremeties and on the surface, but it is not possible in this manner for Christianity to permeate the great mass of the people. Many are necessarily occupied in the great cities, along the railroads, and in educational institutions; and the greater part must consecrate their lives to the maintenance of the faith of the Catholics who are spread all over the country. A large number of missions like those of India and Indo-China are European possessions, hence the missionaries are obliged to devote themselves not only to the diffusion of the Faith, but also to the secular education of the people. They must take care, too, that Protestant missionaries, who are especially successful in this, do not surpass them. What wonder, then, if the Faith has not yet penetrated into this immense population of Asia? The reason is always the same: "THE WORKERS ARE FEW."

WE WANT MISSIONARIES. For the nations are hungry for the truth and thirsty for love. Truly indeed *The little ones have asked for bread, and there was none to break it unto them.*[1] But no, I am wrong, for while Catholic missionaries are lacking, thousands of Protestant missionaries, urged on by the strong spirit of proselytism, and by the characteristic genius of the Anglo-Saxon to move the world, are going forth daily to break the bread of their various doctrines unto the nations of the world. Oh, how ignorant are many good priests of what is going on in the world of God! If our priests only knew, although they are working with untiring zeal at home, that thousands of Protestant ministers are traversing the world,

[1] Lam. iv. 4.

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preaching the name of Christ, and making proselytes, there would not be such apathy, such want of interest, such indifference towards the work of the foreign missions. To these Protestant missionaries can be applied the words of our Lord: *I did not send prophets, yet they ran.*[1] But you Catholic priests, you to whom God has really given a divine mission, this very command to convert the world, what are you doing?

Our missionaries are few, and the scarcity is more noticeable and more to be regretted in face of the rapid strides that Protestants are making in the missions. It often happens that on account of the lack of Catholic missionaries in many countries, the poor people who are unable to distinguish between truth and falsehood, because of their great desire of civilization, run willingly to the first Protestant missionaries that present themselves, while at heart they prefer the Catholics, whom they probably know by reputation, and admire for their sanctity of life and their self-sacrificing, disinterested work. How many towns to-day are the prey of Protestant missionaries of various sects, because of the scarcity of true workers! And the evil they do! At odds on their own beliefs, they agree in denouncing our holy religion to the very heathen who prefer it. Leo XIII in the above-mentioned encyclical spoke of this invasion of Protestants into the Catholic camp, and while touching upon the above point, he reflects also upon the scarcity of true workers:

"Frequently deceitful men, disseminators of error, imitate the apostles of Christ; and, well skilled in human

[1] Jer. xxiii. 21.

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devices, either usurp the office of Catholic priests or teach opposite doctrines, thinking that they will accomplish enough, if by giving a different explanation of the Word of God, they can persuade their hearers that there are many ways to eternal salvation.

"Would that they made no impression at all by their cunning devices! We must, however, deplore the fact that they who either scorn such teachers or never have heard them, and eagerly desire the light of truth, frequently have no one to teach them Holy Scripture and bring them within the pale of the Church. Truly indeed, *The little ones have asked for bread, and there was none to break it unto them.*[1] The fields are white for harvest, and *the harvest indeed is great, but the laborers are few.*[2] Perhaps they will be still fewer in the future."

With the recent suppression of Religious Orders in France, we have reason to fear that the ranks of Catholic missionaries, already well thinned out, will become smaller and smaller. We must not forget that France alone has given to the apostolate seventy-five per cent of the missionaries of the world. Young American ecclesiastics, once convinced of the scarcity of missionaries, and of the extraordinary circumstances that surround the apostolate to-day, will certainly respond with great generosity to the invitation of God and of the Church.

[1] Lam. iv. 4.
[2] Matt. ix. 37.

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CHAPTER VII

INVITATIONS FROM ACROSS THE SEA

Now when he had ceased to speak he said to Simon: Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a draught . . . And when they had done this they enclosed a very great multitude of fishes and their net broke. And they beckoned to their partners that were in the other ship that they should come and help them. And they came. *Luke* v. 4, 6, 7.

THE *workers are few,* cries out our Lord, and the Church repeats the same refrain. Many venerable bishops and missionaries from the lands of the heathen cry "The workers are few." They see on all sides that the harvest is ripe and stands waiting for the reapers to gather it.

Invitations are continually sent us from across the sea. They are addressed to priests in general, and especially to the young ecclesiastics of our Catholic countries, by the valiant champions of the apostolate. These appeals recur frequently in the letters of missionaries. There is not a missionary among neglected heathen, who has not wept at the great ruin of souls, which he, as a helpless spectator, is unable to hinder, because his hands alone are not sufficient to gather the harvest. His thoughts go back to his native land where there are so many priests, and he cries out: "Oh if a few priests would only come to me, only a few, but men of fervor, how much more good could be done, how many more souls could be saved!" And from his heart breaks forth the fervent prayer,

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"O Lord, say to some young, generous souls from my native land, *Go you also into my vineyard.*[1] 'Lord, who art desirous that all men should be saved and arrive at the knowledge of the truth, send laborers into Thy vineyard.'"[2] These sighs of fervent priests have many times received from God the power of moving some generous souls to enlist in the little army of the volunteers of the gospel. Let us collect the faintest echoes of these cries. They may be able to set some minds reflecting on the all-important subject of the salvation of souls.

St. Francis Xavier, the great apostle of the Indies, in his letters to his Society at home, made incessant demands for missionaries. His appeals are just as forcible to-day, because, as we have seen, the whole of India is yet to be converted. These are his words: "Send a great number of workers to India. The more there are, the wider will be the boundaries of Holy Church. Knowing by experience, the loss to the Church occasioned by the lack of zealous persons to spread our holy Faith and the religion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, I demand that workers be sent to this vineyard which is growing white with decay. I address to you one prayer, beloved brethren, and it is this, that every year you send a large number of members of the Society, because we need many for the conversion of the heathen. It is not necessary to be well versed in letters, but in the exercise of virtue."[3]

"I beg you and I conjure you in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to send me a large

[1] Matt. xx. 7. [2] A prayer in the Missal.
[3] Letter to Alphonse Rodriguez, Jan. 22, 1545.

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number of our fellow Jesuits. Let them be preachers, men of well tried virtue, because in this country many temptations present themselves every day. Even if they are not men of eminent knowledge, I beg you and I conjure you to keep this in mind that they be noted for their virtue. Here, in fact, virtue is more precious than knowledge, although, of course, as is evident, virtue that is adorned with wisdom is preferable. May our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in His clemency and mercy draw many and capable workers to His vineyard." [1]

"I pray you that every year more members of the Society be sent here, and that the greater part of them be priests of long experience, men of well tried virtue. Those who are unsuccessful in Europe because they have not the knowledge and eloquence required for preaching and teaching in our colleges, could be of wonderful service here, in the conversion of the heathen. To be sure, there at home they can be of some assistance, but their labors here will bring forth fruits in greater abundance. If you have subjects who have completed their studies at Coimbra, you may send them also. I beg you again to see to it that this year do not pass before we receive reinforcements from our fellow priests at home." [2]

"To-day I demand another favor in the name of all the Christian Portuguese and Indians, and in the name of the heathen themselves, particularly of the Japanese and the Chinese. The favor is that in your admirable zeal for the worship of God and the salvation of souls, you deign to send me this year as

[1] Letter to Father Rodriguez, Dec. 5, 1545.
[2] Letter to Father Rodriguez, Jan. 28, 1549.

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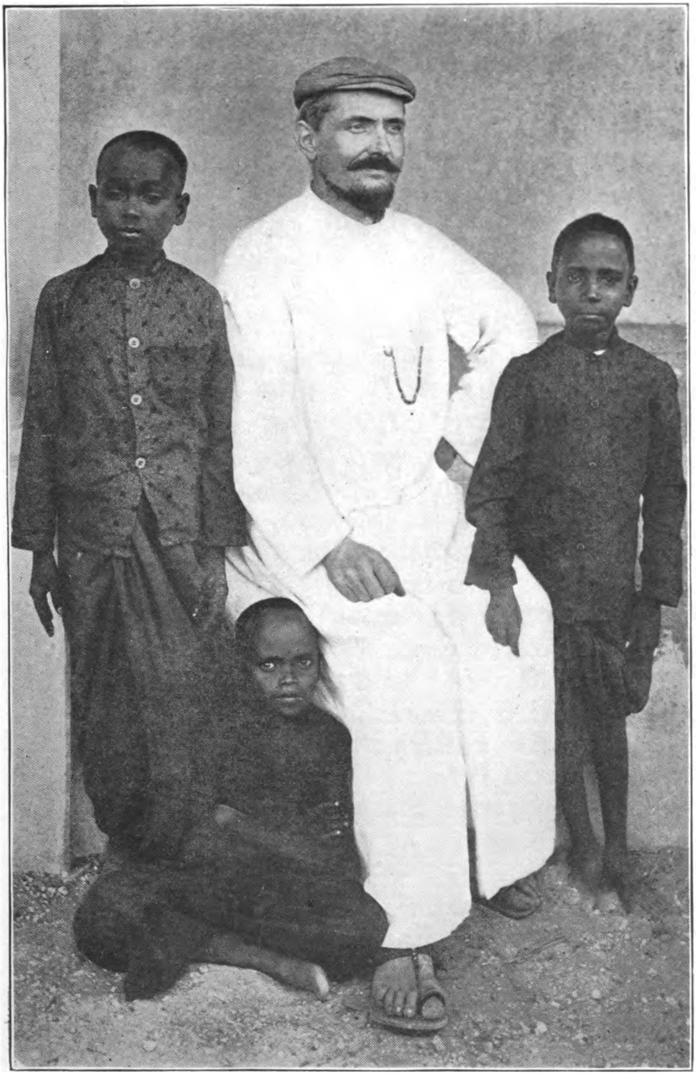

Father Aelen of Nellore, India, and his Altar Boys

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many priests as possible, priests who are well instructed and preferably those who have proven their worth both within the college and without; men who have given great proof of their zeal and of their virtue in the ministry of saving souls, workers, in short, such as India requires. For in this mission, men without experience, although they may be gifted in the field of science and literature, would be of no service.

"Oh, my excellent Sovereign, I conjure you again in the name of your extraordinary charity toward God and toward men who are the images of God, deign to write to Rome to Father Ignatius, the Founder of our Society, and ask him to send to the Indies a great number of priests who are willing to suffer much in body and soul, although they may be lacking in the eloquence that is required for the pulpit. For the missioners of India, and more especially those of China and Japan, must be men of this kind."[1]

In similar language St. Alphonse Rodriguez invited another holy man, St. Peter Claver, the apostle of the negroes, to come to the missions, and his letter likewise pictures conditions that exist to-day. "Beloved brother, I cannot express in words the deep sorrow that possesses me when I think that God is unknown by the greater part of the world, because in many distant regions there is a great lack of His ministers. How it moves one to tears to see so many people lost for the lack of some one to guide them. People are perishing, not because they wish to, but because there is no one to save them. We see so many workers unoccupied where there is no harvest,

[1] Letter to John III, King of Portugal, Apr. 10, 1552.

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and where there is an abundant harvest, workers to be very few.

"What an army of souls would be sent to heaven if there were in these countries half as many priests as there are in Europe living in culpable ease. Priests are shirking the duty of going forth to seek souls, and they seem to forget that they must one day answer to God for their negligence. The riches of remote countries are greatly appreciated by the world, but their inhabitants are ignored. Cannot charity cross these seas which for so many years avarice has traversed? Many ships laden with merchandise and treasures arrive yearly at the ports of Spain, but how few souls arrive at the harbor of eternal happiness! Why will the love of the world for the acquisition of treasures be more ardent than the love for Jesus Christ and the conquest of souls? However barbarous these men may be, they are rough diamonds whose value will greatly compensate the labor of polishing them.

"O brother, son of my soul, what a vast field is open to your zeal! If the glory of God interests you, betake yourself to India. Come and save thousands upon thousands of souls that are being lost! If you love Jesus Christ, come and collect the fruit of His Precious Blood, shed for nations that do not know Its value. As long as you are a member of His Society, spend yourself with Him, even unto death, for the salvation of men."[1]

Who could remain deaf to such warnings, such pressing invitations? These are the letters of saints. The blessed martyr of Oceania, Peter Chanel, in a

[1] Brioschi, *Vida di S. Piedro Claver*, cap. V.

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letter from Valparaiso July 20, 1837, wrote to his beloved Seminarians of the little Seminary of Belley: "How great would be our pleasure if God would raise up among you numerous workers to share our labors and our consolations! Do not let sacrifices detain you. The greater they are, the more fortunate you should consider yourself, to be able to offer them to Him who has done everything for you. I hope you will give your consent in order that we may tell some of the poor savages, that we still have in our native land numerous young candidates who are anxiously awaiting the opportunity to come and help us in the work of evangelizing. May you some day give your lives for those who are now the object of your prayers."

Here are more recent calls. Some missionaries in China, assembled for retreat, addressed this appeal to young ecclesiastics, urging them to dedicate themselves to the conversion of the heathen: "You, who with such great generosity are exerting yourselves to spread the Faith, and who with great zeal desire that the kingdom of God may be known to all mankind, can very easily imagine our grief and our sorrow as we gaze upon a harvest that is over-ripe and decaying because there are no hands to gather it.

"Accustomed to meditate continually upon the most Precious Blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, our souls are sorely grieved as we look around at the millions of heathen for whom the Redemption still means nothing, because there is no voice to make known to them the great value of this divine gift. If our ministry had not been blessed, and if the people

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who surround us had refused the gift of Faith, we would bow our heads to Almighty God, and adore the mysterious depth of His counsels, and we would try to overcome with our prayers the blindness of those who closed their eyes to the Light.

"But to live among a people disposed to receive the gift of salvation, to find oneself in the midst of a harvest that wants nothing but the scythe of the reaper, to be obliged to see it waste on the field, is a thousand times harder to stand. This is a spectacle that cannot fail to bring tears to one's eyes. We cannot drive it away from our minds, and we have come 18,000 miles to lend a helping hand to these unfortunate heathen. If those in our native land who desire to promote the glory of God, could witness, even for a short time, this spectacle which every day confronts us, they would be greatly moved. They would experience great regret to have so frequently offered to Almighty God that sublime prayer, 'Thy kingdom come,' without fully appreciating the depths of its meaning.

"Great indeed is the work of the missionary. He can snatch from the darkness of eternal death whole provinces vast and populous as our own country. He can apply to these nations the merits of the Blood, of the Passion, and of the Death of a God. To save a soul is to preserve one image of Jesus Christ, which cost Him His life's blood. To save thousands of souls is to preserve a thousand images of Jesus Christ. It was this one thought which drove St. Francis Xavier to such distant regions, and it was this also which awakened in us the same vocation. This same thought should move you, generous souls of Europe,

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to leave the little world that hems you in and occupies all your attention."

Father Sebastian Carbone, a missioner in Burmah, can never write to a priest in Italy without betraying a heart saddened by the lack of co-workers. Here are some extracts from his letters: "May God awaken new vocations and send many of His priests to these abandoned districts. Oh, if the young priests of Italy knew how content I am to have embraced the life of the foreign missions, and if they knew the great need there is of priests, I am persuaded that they would wish for wings to fly here with all possible haste. The difficulties of converting these nations are not insuperable. It is sufficient to have zeal and a tender love for their souls, going in search of them from house to house, and from highway to byway.

"How many children die without a hand to pour upon their heads the saving water of baptism and thus open for them the gates of heaven. How many adults die without knowing who has placed them in the world or that there is a life beyond the grave. What a terrible misfortune, that there should be such a scarcity of priests here, while in Italy there are so many!"

In another letter: "Many countries invite us, and wherever we wish to go, they receive us with open arms. If there were only a dozen of us, I believe that in five or six years this tribe would be entirely Christianized, but there are only three. In Italy there are so many priests, while here there are only THREE. Have mercy, O Lord, on so many souls who are deprived of the holy Faith."

He wrote to another priest: "Perhaps you may

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laugh that I dare exhort you to embrace the life of the foreign missions. Laugh if you wish, but remember that the devil also will laugh if Catholic priests do not go there. Laugh if you wish, but the day will come when you will see these idolaters weeping eternal tears, and you will see them on the Day of Judgment looking with angry countenances at those priests who could have gone to preach them the gospel, and did not do so."

Listen to the sighs of a Jesuit missionary, who writes from an Indian mission in America: "I have described my experiences, my dangers and my labors, but what are these if as a reward, a missionary, however unworthy, can save a few souls from the arts of Satan? But, ah me, small is the number of the elect!

"If a priest can increase that mysterious number by one neophyte, will he have reason to weep on account of his slight sacrifice? Certainly not. Recall to your minds the expression of St. Francis Xavier: 'To go to the extreme ends of the earth in order to save one soul, and then die, would be an enviable fortune.' Whoever (and I speak in a spirit of faith) wishes to consecrate himself to the work of tilling the vineyard of the Lord, need not feel that his labors will be fruitless. 'Black gowns! Come here, Black Gowns, and we will embrace the service of the Great Spirit.' Such is the cry which, from time to time, comes forth from these wandering tribes, forgotten as it were, by the nations of the globe.

"This cry of souls, truly Christian, is echoed from rock to rock till it dies away on the shores of some solitary lake without response. If, by chance, it

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comes to the ear of some missionary hidden in the forests, his heart is sad, and, unable to multiply himself as the situation demands, he cries to Heaven for help. His cry is sometimes wafted across the sea, and awakens again in some souls the apostolic zeal. This prayer of the poor, this request of a man, burning with the desire to save souls, will sometime reach you, young levites of the Sanctuary. Gaze on these miserable savages, scattered over the plains, the sport of the grossest superstitions, and in danger of being precipitated into the abyss of Hell, where for all eternity, the Evil One reigns supreme!

"Do not tire of looking at this spectacle, tragic and yet so true. Fix your eyes on the scene. Listen to the cries of these unfortunate heathen. Try to understand their position. Let your heart go forth in sympathy for them in their misfortune, and in a short time you will have compassion on these poor souls, and you will consider as naught the distance, the sufferings, and the sacrifices: for charity ignores all these things. You will think of nothing else. You will have but one desire and one ambition upon earth, namely, to fly to the assistance of these unfortunate creatures, and set those cold regions on fire with the heavenly charity which inflames your soul.

"But do not think, my dear friends, that I wish to enlist you all in the cause, and have you all cross the Atlantic. No, I still have in mind those words, 'One this way, another that way.' I know very well that wherever you are, there are ignorant people to be instructed, sinners to be converted, and the just to be guided in the way of perfection. I do not say that all of you should come, but see how many there

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are of you. Surely some of you could come, even if only a few. Do not be afraid of impoverishing your own country, and do not, on the other hand, let your zeal confine you to the limits of your own country, because *The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof.*[1] I will say even more. If any of you feel this noble inspiration, hurry to the place that most needs your assistance, and that offers the greatest danger. Consecrate yourself to the work there, and die."

Young men, who read these pages, try to appreciate the force of these solemn words and the evidence of this argument which affirms once for all what has been said above.

"You, particularly you," writes an illustrious prelate, "levites of the Sanctuary, you who are growing and being formed within the shadow of the Altar, you who are preparing yourselves to respond to the call of the Master, you particularly I desire to become missionaries. If the grace of God inspires within you a desire for this work, do not trample it under foot. If God tells you to leave your native land, and to follow Him in the land which He will point out to you, do not waver. Make haste to depart, because the souls there are in readiness, and in you they await the Saviour. Turn your steps towards those Institutions and Religious Societies to whom the Holy See has committed the work of tilling the fields of the Church."

I wish that many young ecclesiastics would take to heart these invitations, would meditate upon them, and then ask themselves if they should not respond

[1] Psalms xxiii. 1.

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as did St. Peter Claver to the call of St. Alphonse Rodriguez, by asking permission of his Superiors to go to India. Here is St. Peter Claver's letter:

" For a long time the merciful God has been knocking at the door of my heart, and I have kept it closed up to the present. Reflecting that such action would really be harmful to my soul, I decided to delay no longer in listening and following the voice of our Lord. After consulting with my spiritual director and obtaining his permission, I turn myself to Your Reverence, begging you by the Passion of Christ, and by the dolors of Mary, to place me among the number of the chosen sons, destined for the sublime ministry of the apostolate among the heathen. The voice of Our Lord which calls me to the missions I hear most distinctly and it urges me to embrace the apostolate. I know that I am unworthy of such a favor. However, with God's grace I hope to make myself worthy.

" To abandon my beloved companions, to leave my fatherland and renounce the comforts of the Continent, do not discourage me. With God's help I will overcome all obstacles that stand in my way. The desire of saving souls, bought at such a great price by Jesus Christ, is the only thing that inspires me. I am ready to give my life and my life's blood in helping a brother to escape eternal damnation. God who sees my heart, knows the sincerity of my mind." [1]

May the desire to save souls that cost every drop of Christ's blood inspire you also. The fish are abundant, but the fishermen are few and are not able to draw all into their nets. With pressing invitations

[1] Brioschi, *Vida di S. Piedro Claver*, cap. VI.

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they call some of you also, who are in another boat, because they need your help. Who will go forth? O Lord, say to a large number of volunteers: *Come after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.*[1]

[1] Mark i. 17.

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Chapter VIII

VOCATION

Give ear, ye islands, and hearken ye peoples from afar. The Lord hath called me from the womb. . . . And he said: It is a small thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob. . . . Behold I have given thee to be the light of the Gentiles, that thou mayst be my salvation even to the farthest part of the earth. ***Isaias*** **xlix. 1, 6.**

We now arrive at something more practical. The principal difficulty offered by those who have given this question serious consideration is that a very special vocation is required to become a missioner. "Has not St. Paul said," they object, "*And how shall they preach unless they be sent?*[1] Therefore one must be called by God in an especial manner."

In answer to this objection I would say, "Certainly we must be called by our Lord." Of this there can be no doubt. *Neither doth any man take the honor to himself, but he that is called by God, as Aaron was.*[2] The difficulty, however, loses much of its force when we consider that it comes from ecclesiastics, from persons already called by God.

Many think that a priest who is a Religious should be more perfect than a Secular. How many times we have heard priests say "But I am not a Friar," as if to justify a life characterized by little sanctity. In the gospels we find nothing like this. Show me, if you can, a single precept or counsel of perfection,

[1] Rom. x. 15.   [2] Heb. v. 4.

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by which a priest who really wishes to be "another Christ," is not bound. Secular or Religious, it makes no difference. It is not the Religious or Secular that counts. That which is of most importance is the priesthood itself.

It is the apostolic priest that is the creation of Christ. Among the sacraments we find that of Orders, but there is no mention of religious perfection. Christ did not institute two types of minister, as many seem to think. He created the apostolic priest, and all the perfection He has counseled applies to all His priests alike. If there is a difference between the Religious and the Secular priest, it is certainly not intrinsic, but is found merely in the manner in which each tends toward evangelical perfection.

The Religious priest is bound by his vow of obedience and poverty to exercise the virtues, to which a Secular priest is also bound by the grave obligation of his state. When the standard of the true priesthood was being lowered, the Religious Orders were started to bring back the ideal of the Eternal Priest. So far as they are true apostolic priests, and not because they are members of this or that Order, the Religious have merited well.

Now some believe that to convert the heathen and the infidel, we need a very special vocation. In the greater number of cases, when a young man enters the Seminary, he aspires but to become a priest in his own diocese, and it never occurs to him that in giving himself entirely to Christ, he ought to be willing to exercise his ministry where the needs of Christ are most neglected. In many Seminaries of

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Italy a vocation to the foreign missions is either a thing unheard of or it is considered as something extraordinary, proper to the eccentric, and those who think themselves somewhat better than the rest of mankind; or, on the other hand, it is looked upon as something heroic, at least more to be admired than imitated. As a result, vocations to the foreign missions are rare.

I hope you will not consider it a paradox, on the contrary, if I say to you, that, absolutely speaking, a true vocation to the priesthood should be sufficient to become a missionary.[1]

You will surely understand that a man has little reason to be a minister, who does not correspond to the mind and to the will of the king who employs him. What does the gospel tell us? It says that every priest, Secular or Religious, by the very fact of being a priest, or "another Christ," should be the personification of every evangelical perfection. It teaches that every priest, by the very fact that

[1] In the little book, *Discipline Speciali per gli alunni aspiranti alle Missioni*, of the Institute of Lombardy, we find this about vocations:

"A vocation is an act of Supernatural Providence by which God selects some in preference to others, for the ecclesiastical ministry, and prepares them with the requisite qualities for filling worthily and with commendation the offices of that ministry.

"In this manner theologians ordinarily define vocation. It is not always accompanied by an irresistible propensity to one career, but always, and particularly in the apostolic ministry, it requires a will, constant and generous, to sacrifice oneself to God, together with a disposition to fill the office in which one is placed. The principal qualities required in one who aspires to the missions, is a true disposition founded on a strong faith, and an ardent charity to dedicate oneself to the good of souls, and to the extension of the kingdom of Christ" (pages 11, 12).

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he is a priest, like those who were first called, should be perfectly detached from all things and ready to promote the eternal interests of his Lord and Master in any part of the world; and it is especially in this sense that he is called a Catholic priest, inasmuch as he should have a heart as magnanimous as the world is wide.

He should see no difference of state, of race, or of boundary, but like his Master is obliged to embrace all men in his charity. To be a priest means to exist essentially for others. Christ has not created a priest who may stay at home and look after himself alone. In the gospel we find no distinction between a priest in his own land and a missionary among the heathen. Christ did not create a single priest whom He has not made also an apostle. In fact, a priest is such, because he is an apostle.

For every high priest taken from among men, is ordained for men[1]. . . *By whom we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith in all nations.*[2] Of Himself He said: *I was not sent but to the sheep that are lost of the house of Israel.*[3] To all others He said: *Go ye into the whole world*[4] . . . *and I have appointed you that you should go.*[5] *Going therefore teach ye all nations.*[6] And the apostles, faithful to His command, *going forth preached everywhere.*[7]

Before He ever spoke to the Religious, He placed this injunction on all His apostolic priests: *So likewise every one of you that doth not renounce all that*

[1] Heb. v. 1. [2] Rom. i. 5. [3] Matt. xv. 24.
[4] Mark xvi. 15. [5] John xv. 16. [6] Matt. xxviii. 19.
[7] Mark xvi. 20.

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he possesseth cannot be my disciple.[1] From all His disciples, and consequently from all those who in a particular manner should follow Him closely, as His priests, He demanded a total detachment from home and parents: *He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me.*[2] And in another place we find: *If any man come to me and hate not his father and mother and wife and children and brethren and sisters . . . he cannot be my disciple.*[3]

Commenting on this text, St. Jerome says: "After God love your father, love your mother and your children, but if it is necessary to contrast the love of parents and children with the love of God, and you cannot serve both, then you should hate them, and turn with filial piety towards God."

The apostles who gave themselves to Christ without reserve, knowing what He wanted of them, abandoning all things and all men, made this complete detachment a necessary condition of following Him; and of them it is said that *they forthwith left their nets and father and followed him.*[4]

What reason is there for saying that to-day we should not demand this same disposition from every one aspiring to the priesthood? Is it not true that understanding the priesthood as Christ instituted it, and as He has pictured it for us in the gospel, every priest is a missionary? The priest who nurtures an inordinate affection for his family, and who tries to gain material resources for them in order to elevate their social position, is not a priest created by Jesus Christ. *But they were not of the seed of those men*

[1] Luke xiv. 33.
[2] Matt. x. 37.
[3] Luke xiv. 26.
[4] Matt. iv. 22.

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by whom salvation was brought to Israel.[1] He has not the bone and sinew of a missionary, because he is not living up to the model set by the Master for all His priests.

Why then should it seem so strange that a young priest, a cleric called to follow closely in the footsteps of Jesus Christ as His apostle, should be obliged, without becoming a Religious, to leave his parents and his native land when the interests of his Master demand it? Why should we demand a second vocation, a special calling from on high? When Catholic countries are amply provided with pastors, to my mind it seems strange that all other priests do not spend their lives among people who are yet in darkness, for the only desire of Christ's life was to lead into the fold those sheep who did not belong to it.

Since Christ has entrusted to the Church the conversion of the whole world, and not merely a part of it, it is equally necessary to have pastors distributed through the entire world, not only to serve the needs of those who are already converted, but also to look after the pagans, who up to the present have no knowledge whatever of the true God. After the Ascension of Our Lord, the Apostles did not stay together in order to convert one people at a time, but they dispersed throughout the world, and woe betide *us* if they had not followed this method, but had desired to first await the conversion of the Jews, with whom they naturally were obliged to begin the work of the apostolate. "Since they were to undertake the conversion of the whole world,

[1] I Mach. v. 62.

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it was not fitting that they should remain together any longer, for it would have been a great loss to the world."[1]

Love is an excellent thing, a great good indeed . . . it spurs us on to do great things, and excites us to desire always that which is most perfect. . . . The lover flies, runs, and rejoices; . . . Love often knows no measure but is inflamed above all measure . . . complains not of impossibility, because it conceives that it may, and can do all things. *Imitation of Christ*, Book III, Chap. 5.

Of what use is a priest who does not love God and souls, or who loves them but little? He is good for nothing. If a priest really loves God and souls, I say to him, that he may not be actively engaged in the work of foreign missions (because all cannot be so engaged, and are not obliged to be), yet he is certainly a missionary at heart, and well disposed towards this noble work. All priests, merely on account of their vocation to the priesthood, ought to feel within them the disposition to be missionaries.

If the salvation of souls in heathen countries is the more arduous ministry, this is a circumstance entirely accidental and frequently exaggerated. The good and zealous priest at home leads an arduous, sacrificing, laborious life, and if occasion requires it, a life just as heroic as that of the missionary afar. If you call the life of a missionary heroic, it is so because the life of every true priest should be heroic — a life of perpetual chastity, of detachment from the world with its pomps and pleasures. A willingness to expose one's own life for the flock when

[1] St. J. Chrysostom, Hom. 87 in Joan.

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it is necessary, a desire always to be at the disposition of the faithful, are, so to speak, not ordinary acts, but heroic.

To my mind it is only a question of a true vocation to the priesthood. If you have this vocation, to become a missionary does not seem to be anything uncommon; it does not require a new vocation. It is in this sense that I use the word "vocation" in this book, when speaking to ecclesiastics about becoming missionaries. When there is a true vocation, there is also a true love for Christ and for His souls, and a spirit of sacrifice and of zeal. These alone are the characteristics of a good priest here, and a good missionary in foreign parts.

When St. Paul was a prisoner in Rome, and wished to send a representative to his dear Philippians, he recommended and sent to them Timothy, as one who, burning with the love of Christ and the salvation of souls, would voluntarily undertake the long journey, and interest himself in that church. *And I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy unto you shortly. . . . For I have no man so of the same mind, who with sincere affection is solicitous for you.*[1] St. Paul could easily have sent some one else to that mission, but he did not find another who had a vocation, and rather plainly he tells them the reason: *For all seek the things that are their own, not the things that are Jesus Christ's.*[2]

One day a young man heard the loving voice of Jesus, who knocked at the inner door of his heart and asked him this question: "Tell me, do you love me, do you love me more than your companions do?"

[1] Philip. ii. 19, 20. [2] Philip. ii. 21.

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and the young man, happy to hear such a question from the lips of the Saviour, in an outburst of generosity and fervor, responded: "O Lord, if you ask me this question, it means that you will enable me to love you as you desire. Yes, I love you." Our Lord replied: "Follow me."

The youth followed Jesus into the Seminary; some years passed, during which he responded faithfully to the graces which the Saviour had given him. Every day he felt the love for Jesus Christ increasing in his heart. Attempting to perfect himself, he tried to conform his heart to that of his Master. Besides the love for Jesus Christ, insensibly but strongly, he felt another love springing up within him, a love supernatural and divine, a love for souls. "Jesus Christ," he would exclaim, "how much you have loved me! How happy I am to feel that I am the object of your predilection! I would like to be able to show you, beyond a doubt, my love and my gratitude in return. I would like to do something that is worthy of one of your disciples, something that will please you. Tell me, what will please you most? What sacrifice will be most acceptable to you? I am ready for anything. The greater the sacrifice you demand of me, the happier I will be, if I am only able to offer it to you."

And the zealous seminarian knew that Christ desired nothing so much as the salvation of souls. He knew also that in far-off lands millions of souls were being lost for lack of missionaries. He had read in the "Annals" of the deplorable condition of vast realms still sunk in idolatry, and he had learned also of the great good that a holy missionary could

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do there. One day an idea flashed upon him that lightened his heart, as if he had discovered the key to some great secret which he had often sought in vain. He cried out, "I have found it. I will become a missionary, for only in this way shall I be able to show Jesus Christ the great love of my heart."

Some years passed. The one thing that occupied his mind was his former decision. He prayed continually to our Lord to make known to him His holy will. He unburdened the secret of his heart to his director, and then went to the bishop and begged for permission to enter some Institute for Foreign Missions.

Here evidently there was no question of a new vocation. It is love which inspires us to sacrifice; it is the love of God permeating our very being that generates a love equally strong for all humanity. It is love that perfects and develops the vocation to the priesthood.

Monsignor Demimuid, analyzing the vocation of a missionary, finds its root in this double love for God and souls. Here are his words:

"The innermost reason for the Catholic apostolate will be found in two new ideas brought to us by Jesus Christ. The first of these ideas is that all souls are equal before God, and have the same right to possess the truth and receive the favors of Heaven. Whatever the distance that separates them, they should be all united in the same sheepfold under the guidance of the one and only Shepherd.

"The second idea is this: Since God is present everywhere by a power that gives life to all beings,

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and by a Providence that sustains and supports them, there should be in every land and in every place thousands to adore Him, and to do Him homage, for from Him they have received all that they have, even their very existence.

"To these two ideas there corresponds a double love; a holy passion of love for God and for souls; a flame that burns brightly in the heart of the missionary as he sees more clearly the light of truth to which we all lay claim; a love of God, but a love that wishes to extend the glory of God throughout the whole world; a love that gives no quiet to the soul possessed by it till it has sacrificed all to God and carried afar the name, the knowledge, and the worship of Him for whom it would sacrifice life; a love, in fine, that caused the immortal St. Francis Xavier, in a sublime outburst of apostolic zeal to say: 'Let us go, Xavier, since thy God is everywhere, it behooves us to see that He is everywhere known and adored. What a reproof it would be for thee, if the Author of thy being were praised in every corner of the world by insensible creatures, while those to whom He has given reason and knowledge did not know Him.'"

A little faith and a stronger love for Jesus Christ — this is all then that is special about the vocation for the missions. *Simon, son of John, lovest thou me? . . . Lord thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. He said to him: Feed my sheep.*[1] Only when one really loves Jesus Christ is it easy to say to Him: *I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.*[2]

[1] John xxi. 17. [2] Luke ix. 57.

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To be a missionary is nothing more than this. The seraphic St. Francis understood this and went to Syria to preach Jesus Christ. It was understood by St. Theresa, when, a young girl of seven years, she fled from her father's home with her little brother Rodrigo, to go to Africa to win the crown of martyrdom. All saintly priests who, if not in reality, at least in desire, were missionaries, understood this. The conversion of the Gentiles has always been the desire of the saints and of all good and generous souls.

Monsignor Marinoni, the first Superior of the Institute of Missions in Lombardy, said that while he was still in the Seminary, the life of St. Francis Xavier filled his whole being with a love for the missions among the heathen. Our Lord destined him, however, for an even more important work, namely, that of training missionaries, of whom he sent out thirty-nine companies. To those of the last he said in farewell:

"It is unnecessary to say that I envy, in a holy manner, your noble resolution, and that, old and decrepit as I am, in these solemn moments I feel myself transported with a desire to follow you."

The great French orator, Père Monsabré, preaching in the Conference of Lyons on the work of the Propagation of the Faith, in 1891, gave expression to the following words: "O Lord Jesus Christ, if another will than mine had not made me prisoner and condemned me to another field of action, I should accuse myself of tepidity for not taking the way of the missions."

When we love Christ, we love also the souls created

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by Him, and in order to save them, no sacrifice is too great. We understand, therefore, the desire of the seraphic virgin Catherine, who wished to go down into the depths of Hell in order to steal the souls that were imprisoned there. We also understand the fiery expression of Xavier: "Give me souls, give me souls, take away from me everything else," and the still stronger words of the great apostle: *For I wished myself to be an anathema from Christ for my brethren.*[1]

The Religious, who, as I have said above, endeavored to conform their lives perfectly to the teachings of Christ, were above all missionaries, and almost the only evangelizers during the Middle Ages. It was St. Augustine who evangelized England; St. Boniface was the apostle of Germany; SS. Anscarius and Witzmar evangelized Sweden, Denmark, Iceland, and Greenland. Later on the Brothers of the great Orders of St. Francis and St. Dominic were dispersed throughout the entire world to preach Jesus Christ to the infidels; while as early as the thirteenth century the Franciscan John of Mt. Corvinus was Archbishop of Pekin.

Gregory IX, writing to the Dominican missionaries who were spread over the entire world, addressed them thus: "Gregory, bishop, servant of the servants of God. To our beloved sons, the Friars Preachers scattered among the Russians, Greeks, Persians, Tartars, Indians and Ethiopians." It was the first disciples of these holy founders who went to preach the Faith in Morocco; and when the Portuguese first landed in the Congo, they found monks who had pre-

[1] Rom. ix. 3.

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ceded them. There they opened a new way through the Indies and members of the Religious Orders everywhere accompanied those intrepid navigators who planted the Cross on every shore and preached salvation to all people.

From the depths of the Ocean a new world arose, and the genius of an Italian discovered America. Immediately Friars were ready to go forth and gain conquests for Jesus Christ. Meanwhile the invincible Society of Jesus came into existence, and its sons soon rivaled in zeal and boldness the greatest apostles of Christianity. A son of this Society, the great Xavier, who alone gave to the Church one million souls, preached the Faith in the East Indies, converted the Japanese, and died while he was endeavoring to enter China, which at this time was about to be invaded by others of his fellow Jesuits.

Another courageous Jesuit was the Apostle of the Negroes, St. Peter Claver, who, during an apostolate of forty years in Carthage, assuaged the sorrows of millions of poor slaves, and baptized about 300,000. Even to-day if we consider only the two hundred and twelve provinces into which Asia, Africa, and Oceania are divided, scarcely more than fifty are under the direction of secular priests: all the others are directed by Orders and Congregations of Regulars. The Society of Jesus alone has to-day in the whole world four thousand of her sons employed in the work of the apostolate.

Now, my dear young men, the vocation to the missions has nothing really special about it. It is essentially the vocation of every holy priest. It is a disposition of souls ready to sacrifice themselves

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for their fellow-men, to attest, as it were, in a practical manner their love for Jesus Christ. *Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends.*[1] Now from what I have said up to the present about vocations, I do not want any one to conclude that there are no good and holy priests excepting those who give themselves to the missions, or that all good priests should become missioners. Nothing is farther from my thoughts than this. I have simply tried to show that in the vocation to the missions there is nothing very special, but that it is proper to every good minister of the gospel, and I have tried to dispel the idea of those who think that a call equal to that of St. Paul is necessary before one can dedicate himself to the missions.

To me, the least of all the saints, is given this grace, to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to enlighten all men that they may see what is the dispensation of the mystery which hath been hidden from eternity in God. . . .

Eph. iii. 8, 9.

Just as those err who think that a most special call from God and extraordinary dispositions are needed for the Foreign Missions, so equally dangerous and erroneous is the opinion of not a few others who think that this vocation is entirely a question of character, of temperament, and of natural disposition. They think it is necessary to have a character so devoid of sentiment that it permits of little love for home and parents. According to them a

[1] John xv. 13.

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missionary should be a poet and a dreamer, one who dislikes restraint and is eager to see new lands.

I cannot deny that among the aspirants for the work of the missions we find ardent souls, chivalrous and gallant spirits; but he who confounds these natural dispositions with the true vocation, he who thinks that such dispositions are indispensable to the apostolic life, greatly deceives himself. A knowledge of the young aspirants in a missionary college is sufficient to prove that there are within its ranks quiet characters, sweet, modest souls, who are most affectionate towards their parents and others who are dear to them. In one who is prompted by strong faith and filled with the love of God, a holy enthusiasm and a touch of the romantic does no harm. Great and generous works arouse enthusiasm, and it is quite proper that the quiet conquests of the Faith should not be unaccompanied by this.

It is true that to the mind of a young man there is a poetic side to missionary life, the romance of conquest and of suffering. He anticipates with great impatience the numberless conversions, the ransom of slaves, the baptism of abandoned children, etc. He dreams of the long voyages, the hunger, the thirst, the intense heat, the solitude, and then who knows but that in the distant future he sees martyrdom itself? When after many doubts and uncertainties, after many internal battles with his own flesh and blood, after he has been counseled to pray much, in the silence, perhaps, of a quiet sunset, or in the fervor of a long thanksgiving after Communion, the young man says to Jesus the great "Yes," and when at the foot of the Altar, he dedicates himself irrev-

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ocably to the apostolic life — that moment is necessarily filled with a holy intoxication.

And now since we have seen that the character of the missioners is not so extraordinary as some would lead us to think, let us say a word about one of the most efficacious means of increasing their number.

The intellect is the principle of love. We love nothing, and we wish for nothing that we do not know and admire, and so it is that example and reading have always been the ordinary means used by Providence to attract souls. Just as the love of Jesus, who was sacrificed for us, moves holy souls to give up all for Him, so the example of the heroes and heroines of the Faith, by its very nature inspires noble and generous characters to emulate the same, while a knowledge of the miseries of others moves pious hearts to lend them a helping hand. Since, therefore, the ordinary means of coming to a knowledge of the missions and all that pertains to them, is reading the accounts of those who have labored in or visited the missions, so I do not hesitate to say that the greater proportion of vocations arise precisely from the reading of some book or paper that treats of such things. The graphic accounts of the labors and heroic sacrifices achieved by the missionaries; the long and adventurous journeys; the life of drudgery and misery, the sufferings, the solitude of soul, the joys which always accompany such sacrifices, and most of all the deaths of these good men, not infrequently by martyrdom, greatly affect us, and by their very nature, inspire in the hearts of those who read them, the desire to imitate such noble lives.

Many a young man of noble character as he reads

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a pamphlet of the Propagation of the Faith, feels his very heart palpitating with a holy enthusiasm at the accounts of these heroic deeds. In a thoughtful mood he lays down the little paper, and upon his brow is written in unmistakable characters the ardent desire of his heart.

Rev. Father Tissot, Superior General of the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales, illustrates very well the influence that such reading exercises on the souls of young men. He writes:

"I defy a Christian, truly worthy of the name, to run over the pages of the Annals of the Catholic Missions, which describe the combats with Satan, the horrors of paganism, the apostasy of proselytes, the yearnings for the Faith, the difficulties of conversion, and the groans and tears of our priests, without repeating the words of Clovis at the account of the Passion: 'Why was I not there, I and my Franks?'

"I know that first of all it is the call of God that makes apostles. The object of prayer is to render this call efficacious. But before this call touches the fibres of one's heart, it is necessary first to ignite the flame which St. Paul spoke of when he said: *For the charity of Christ presseth us,*[1] and to give expression to those sublime words of the Blessed Perboyre: 'Life for life, blood for blood.' This call is manifested by extraordinary signs, and these signs may be numerous *at sundry times and in divers manners,*[2] but the most ordinary are, first, example; and then a knowledge of the needs of souls. Example arouses generous emulation. Themistocles put on his

[1] II Cor. v. 14. [2] Heb. i. 1.

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Rescued from Unnatural Death by Sisters

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sword after he had been tormented for a long time by the vision of the trophies of Miltiades, which would not allow him to sleep; and Julius Cæsar heaved a sigh at Gades while contemplating a statue of Alexander the Great: 'Ah,' he cried, 'at my age he had conquered the universe, and I have as yet done nothing,' and he fled to victory. 'Why can I not do what others have done?' said St. Augustine, and he was converted. Oh, how many priests, how many levites, how many virgins, when they hear an account of the deeds of our missionaries, are moved to the very soul, and after humbling themselves in prayer, rise up and cry out, as did the immortal artist at the sight of a masterpiece, 'I also will be a painter'—'I too will be an apostle.'

"The needs of souls! where are they described in more vivid colors than in the letters that are found in the Annals, and for how many, after they have read them, is the apparition of the Macedonian to St. Paul brought vividly to life: *Pass over into Macedonia and help us?* [1] Upon the souls that are predestined for the apostolate, this reading has an effect that is magic, or rather divine. It is like those celestial voices that revealed to Joan of Arc her divine mission."

What we read in the lives of some of the martyrs who were most illustrious in the last century, is worthy of note for its bearing upon this subject.

Just de Bretenières, who died for the Faith in Korea on the eighth of March in the year 1866, while yet a child, was very much moved by the stories he heard, and decided to dedicate himself to the con-

[1] Acts xvi. 9.

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version of the heathen. The miserable condition in which he knew so many poor unfortunate souls were thrown, moved him deeply, and one day he was seen to stop his play rather suddenly as if listening to distant voices. The poor Chinese seemed to call out to him: "Just, Just, come and save us," and he wondered that his brother who stood near him did not hear the request. He followed the call to Korea, and to martyrdom.

Of Mons. Ridel, Vicar Apostolic of Korea, and Confessor of the Faith, we read the following most pleasing incident:

One day when he was a little boy, he was playing near his good mother and saw a blue-covered book on the table. It was a number of the Annals of the Propagation of the Faith. "Mamma, are there stories in this book?" "Yes, my child, it is a book of stories about missionaries." "What are missionaries?" "They are priests who go away off among savage people who do not know God, to instruct them and help them go to heaven." "Oh, I want to go too, and teach these people, because I want them to go to heaven with us." The mother took the child in her arms, and pressed him to her bosom, and from that very moment he never abandoned the idea of becoming a missionary. He died Bishop of the heroic Church of Korea.

The Blessed Théophane Vénard, who was martyred in Tonkin at the early age of thirty-one years, wrote from his cage to his brother a few days before his death: "Your brother will be beheaded, and will shed his blood for the most noble of all causes, for God. I shall be a martyr! This was the dream of my child-

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hood days. When a boy of nine years on the hills of Bel-Air as I led my little goat to pasture, I read with great interest the life and death of the Venerable Charles Cornay, and I said to myself, 'I also want to go to Tónkin, I want to be a martyr.' O wonderful providence that has conducted me through the labyrinth of this life to Tonkin and martyrdom."

The reading of the Annals had something to do with the development of the vocation of the Blessed Perboyre, and we read of the Blessed Chanel, that after he had been ordained a priest on July 15, 1827, and nominated Vicar of Amherieux, and then Curé of Crozot, the thought of the missions kept recurring to his mind. "I read one day," he said, "a copy of the Annals of the Propagation of the Faith, and I was greatly moved. I seemed to see those poor islanders, those idolaters, those cannibals whom the devil held in his dominion. They held out their hands to me, and I could hear their horrible cries, 'Who will dispel our darkness? Who will break the chains of our slavery and come to our assistance?' "[1]

We may conclude with Père Tissot:

"It is a wonderful and glorious fact for the end of this century, that while speculators and economists boast of the riches, healthfulness, and attractions of a country in order to bring colonists there (and these things are not always true), the publications of the Propagation of the Faith speak only of privations, of dangers, and of disease, and the more they exaggerate the facts, and the more vividly they picture martyrdom, the greater zeal and interest are aroused

[1] *Les Martyrs J. B. Perboyre et P. L. Marie Chanel,* D. Dumoulin et Cie., Paris.

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for the missions. The most envied are the places that are most unwholesome and most dangerous. We could mention Seminaries where the Superiors are obliged to moderate reading of this character, as, in the time of Scipio Africanus, the Roman Senate was obliged to interdict enrolment for the deadly siege of Numantia, for fear of depopulating Italy. But there is no fear that Italy will see the clerics deserting her Seminaries, in order to enlist in the Foreign Missions. Very few ecclesiastic provinces give their share to the missions. The work of the missions is not known. How many Seminaries there are where a publication of the Propagation of the Faith is never seen!

What keeps so many from giving themselves to the missions, however, is fear of the difficulties — I should be obliged to leave my native land — my parents — then there are new customs and manners — oppressive, dangerous climate — and then —

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Chapter IX

THE DIFFICULTIES

What other men and women have done, can you not do? Love makes those things which are cruel and inhuman, easy to bear and counts them as nothing. St. Aug., *Ser. ix.*, "*De Verb. Dom.*"

Mons. Marinoni, who knew very well the spirit and the disposition that the aspirant to the missions should have, did not hesitate to say that all are not made for such arduous undertakings. For these enterprises are needed strong, courageous spirits, who know how to meet and overcome the difficulties inherent in such a life; and in his writings we find the following:

"Just as the vocation to the missions is attractive and, I was about to say, fascinating for one who has a spark of faith, so is it equally arduous and demands the most steadfast character possible. Here we find fulfilled to the letter the incident of Gedeon, who wishing to combat with 120,000 Madianites, collected 22,000 young men of Israel, and considered them very small for his needs. The angel of the Lord said to him, 'You have too many soldiers. Send home all those who are timid and fearful.' There remained only 10,000, and the angel again said, 'These are too many also. Lead them down to the water. There I will try them, and only those whom I indicate shall remain with you. The others must return to their homes.' The result was that only

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300 remained, those who, mindful of self-restraint, did not kneel down to drink; and this small number was sufficient to defeat the formidable army of the Madianites. Such is the case in regard to missionaries. Our Lord accepts only those few who observe the conditions laid down by Him."

The apostolic life is hard. Few if any of our readers will deny it. It requires great sacrifices, sad detachments from home and friends, many privations, and great sufferings. It would not be so beautiful and so admirable, so great and so heroic if it were not arduous and filled with difficulties. How many there are in the world who undergo great sacrifices and spend many years in study for the attainment of an idea, for the accumulation of riches, for the satisfaction, perhaps, of a vile passion. How many there are who even jeajordize their own lives for these causes. What difficulty will not vanish before love? The apostolic life among the heathen certainly requires great courage in those who consecrate themselves to the cause, but, however great the difficulties, they are not insurmountable. We need but to look at them in the right light. Even sacrifice has its beauty, and men have always held in esteem and glory those who have distinguished themselves in heroic enterprises. The difficulties of the apostolic life must be considered in the light of faith and embraced through love of God. If we consider them in this manner, they attract rather than repel us. We must be lifted up on the wings of faith, and separated from the cold atmosphere of self-love that to-day pervades everything and destroys all enthusiasm for noble and magnanimous works. We must

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enter into the atmosphere of charity and of heroism and think that, even if it does cost a great sacrifice to embrace this vocation, Christ paid much more to redeem us. What would have been our lot if our Divine Redeemer had regulated His actions by the norm of niggardly human self-love? If we, sons of our Redeemer, wish to prove ourselves worthy of the name, shall we not be inspired by the sentiments of our Divine Benefactor, *who having joy set before him, endured the cross?* [1]

We should recall the fact that is suggested by the illustrious Bishop of Bayeux, namely, that Christ, in order to save the world, did not refuse the ignominious death of slaves and malefactors. The Church, the Divine Spouse which He purchased with His own blood, thought no sacrifice too great to hasten the propagation of the gospel. As an intrepid traveler she has marched through the centuries and left the imprint of her footsteps and the traces of her sufferings on every path of the earth. Always ready to speak and to shed her blood, if needs be, she has made herself heard by every tribe, and fought in every arena.

Our fathers in the Faith, whose spoiled children we are, paid the price of their own blood to acquire the glorious name of Christians. At the present time our own missionaries, overcome by suffering, worn out by fatigue, and aged with the weight of years, without complaint gladly accept such misery and such hardships for the love of Jesus Christ, and to extend the conquests of His kingdom. Before these examples where is the man who does not feel a great spirit of

[1] Heb. xii. 2.

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emulation of these magnanimous souls, rising within his heart? How small and insignificant the difficulties of the apostolic life appear when we look at them with the eye of faith, and how they disappear when he who beholds them carries within his breast a heart that is burning with the love of God! As we have said before, the vocation to the missions reduces itself to a little more faith, and a little stronger love for Christ. When one is animated with this fire, then he is an apostle, then he has a vocation, then the difficulties vanish, then it is that he understands and makes his own the sublime sentiments of the great apostle, St. Paul: *Who then shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation? or distress? or famine? or nakedness? or danger? or persecution? or the sword?* No, none of these, for *in all these things we overcome because of him that hath loved us.*[1] *But I fear none of these things, neither do I count my life more precious than myself, so that I may consummate my course and the ministry of the word which I received from the Lord Jesus.*[2] *Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation.*[3]

My dear young men, if the Master invites you to follow Him to the missions, will your heart become weak in view of the difficulties which accompany such a noble invitation? Certainly it will, if you trust in yourself, but your confidence should be placed entirely in the invincible power of the Divine Spirit who animated the first Apostle Paul and caused him to cry out, *I can do all things in him who strengtheneth me.*[4]

[1] Rom. viii. 35, 37.
[2] Acts xx. 24.
[3] II Tim. ii. 10.
[4] Phil. iv. 13.

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If this Spirit calls you, fear not, but go forth with love and trust, upon the road that lies open before you. Take courage at the thought of future battles, for you will fight them with the Cross as your sword. Let your ardor ever increase as you reflect upon the small army of the Master. Armed with justice and with the faith of the gospel, you will conquer, even if you die at your post. "The priest of God, holding the gospel, and guarding the precepts of Christ, may be put to death, but he cannot be conquered." [1]

I often think of the holy women of the Gospel who went forth to anoint the body of the Saviour. A great difficulty presented itself to them: *Who shall roll us back the stone from the door of the sepulchre?* [2] But they did not lose courage, for their love was great, so they continued on their way, confident that somehow they should succeed, and upon arriving, *they saw the stone rolled back. For it was very great.*

Go forth likewise. Your work is the inspiration of your love for Christ. You are starting out, not to anoint the body of a loved one who is dead, but to bring spiritual resurrection to those who are truly dead, "the dead of centuries." Do not say, *Who shall roll us back the stone?* Our Lord himself always smoothes over the difficulties that are placed in the way of the accomplishment of His holy designs.

But let us face these formidable difficulties. At least let us consider those that give the most alarm, and let us see if they really have sufficient force to

[1] St. Cyprian, Bk. I. Ep. III. *ad Cornel.*
[2] Mark xvi. 3, 4.

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deter a young man who is animated with the true spirit of faith. For some missions the times of heroic deeds are past, and one finds himself as well situated there as in our civilized countries. For the greater part of the others, the difficulties are more or less lightened. The voyages are neither as dangerous nor as long as in the times of St. Francis Xavier. To-day a voyage to the missions is almost a recreation and diversion, that many would gladly undertake if they could, but I hear you say that it is not the voyage. A voyage to the East or some other place you would gladly make, but it is the necessity of staying there, and staying there forever. This is the difficulty. You say, "How could I ever become resigned to leave forever my own beloved country? How could I live among barbarous, savage people, and adapt myself to their manners and customs? How could I ever stand that climate that is so different from my own? How could I face those diseases and perhaps premature death, but, above all, how could I ever have the courage to leave my dear parents?"

Let us consider these difficulties one by one.

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CHAPTER X

OUR NATIVE LAND

Go forth out of thy country. And I will make of thee a great nation. ***Gen.* xii. 1, 2.**

No prophet is accepted in his own country. ***Luke* iv. 24.**

ACCORDING to Père Janvier, the more beautiful one's country is, the richer and more glorious it is, the more one loves it; the more cruel is his separation from it. So true is this that for many people exile is harder to bear than death itself. When God wished to punish the Israelites, He did not condemn them to death, but banished them from the shores of the Jordan and from the holy city of Jerusalem. The splendors of Babylon and Nineveh were unable to console the afflicted sons of Jacob. They hung their silent harps on the willow trees of the valleys, and, seated on the banks of the river, wept bitterly as they bethought themselves of Sion.

The missionary is bound by a similar sentiment to his native country. To an American his country is so dear on account of its spirit of religious liberty and democracy; the vigorous, frank, generous type of its manhood; its practical, up-to-date methods, manners and customs; its great cities full of life and commercial activities; the inexhaustible fertility of its soil and its rank among the powers of the world — that he is never happy when far removed from it.

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But pride in one's nation, and love of one's country, though rooted ever so deeply in his heart, should never prevent a priest from being ready, as were the apostles, to go and find souls in the utmost corners of the world, if the voice of God calls him. The true priest is a man who looks forward to eternity. Unlike other men, he cannot have a family, he is prohibited from engaging in material business. Therefore he has no ties that bind him to the earth, or prevent him from consecrating himself wholly to the salvation of all men.

Our native country is indeed dear to us. But to how many others, who are obliged to abandon it for reasons less noble and disinterested than ours, is it not equally dear? Certainly, if we sons of God, ministers of Christ, only did for our Lord what the children of the world do to gratify their passions, to promote their own interests, to ruin their souls, and to diffuse error, then victory would be ours, because good always conquers evil. Will it then be too great a sacrifice for us to leave the land of our birth, to go forth and establish the kingdom of God among people who have not the Faith?

Consider well what I am about to say. The sun never sets upon the possessions of England. Those dominions, spread over the face of the earth, are governed by Englishmen, defended almost entirely by English soldiers, and filled with numerous tradesmen, merchants, and planters who come from England and from every other nation in Europe. Thousands upon thousands of sons of this adventurous nation adapt themselves to live for years far away from their native country. Many of them leave their bones upon

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foreign soil, and yet I have never heard them boast of the sacrifice that they undergo in the service of their King, or because of their great desire for wealth.

We likewise serve a King whose possessions are the entire world. We are His soldiers and His ministers. We are bound by no family ties, hence why should we find it so hard to leave our country in order to save souls for Christ? Poor England, where would you be to-day, if your sons loved you so much that they could not separate themselves from you?

Let us board a transatlantic liner crowded with immigrants. There you will see girls and boys, old men and women, without means, and unable to speak a word of any language save their own. They face an unknown land, leaving behind them in many cases all they hold dear. And they do this in the hope of making a few hundred dollars. Is it possible that the hearts of these poor sons of the earth can be moved more easily by the desire for wealth than the hearts of the ministers of God by the lofty ideal of co-operating in the work of the redemption of the human race?

Every one knows the zeal of proselytism that explains the presence of Protestants in the mission field. Countless missionaries, men and women of different denominations, show great courage in traveling all over the world, distributing their Bibles, calumniating Catholicism, and increasing the babel of false creeds. It would be unfair to say that all these ministers make a business of their preaching, and go into the mission field simply to turn into cash their lucrative positions and make a berth for their old age. If this were the case, they would give much

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less annoyance to the Catholic missionaries; but there are many who work indefatigably for the propagation of their doctrines, even sacrificing their lives. Tell me, have they not also a beloved country that they have to leave in order to accomplish their mission?

But let us elevate our minds to the sublime region of heroism. This fact, however admirable, is often passed over: who more than women are attached to their own country, to their own home and fireside? Men are more active, and often travel great distances, but do you ever hear of women traveling over the face of the globe to sell their wares, to explore new countries, or to engage in battle? Not even the so-called "new woman" has courage for this, but the love of Christ and of souls has accomplished this miracle. In the century that has just passed, the weaker sex has shown itself the stronger in the work of the apostolate in foreign lands. At present there are more Sisters than priests in the mission field. I have before me the precise number: Asia, 10,973; Africa, 3,055; Australia, 4,583; Oceania, 1,003.[1]

Have we ever heard that Christ gave any mission to women? No. What then has been the incentive for these noble, gentle creatures to leave their homes? Nothing else than their love for Christ and for souls. How is it that women, naturally less courageous and physically more delicate than men, have almost outstripped the latter in self-sacrifice? The women who are in the mission field are, for the most part, the

[1] *Missiones Cath. cura S. Congr. de Prop. Fide.* 1907.
The Sisters of American and European missions are not included in the above figures. In these missions there are 40,000 Sisters.

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flower of womanhood, whether we consider their education, their ability, or their birth. How is it that at the command or even the suggestion of their Superiors they gladly leave their country, courageously break every human tie, and leave home forever, to go, as Monsabré says, "to give to the children of barbarians and savages their pure hearts which prompt them to make sacrifices unknown to the best of mothers?" How is it that in many communities, when there is a request for two Sisters to serve in some foreign mission there are ten or twenty volunteers?

In a distant mission a great epidemic was raging, and many of the Sisters of St. Vincent de Paul succumbed to the dread disease. They became the victims of their heroism in tending the sick. When the sad news reached the Mother-house, there was a request for more Sisters to fill the places of those who had died. The Community was called together by the Superioress, who told them of the scourge that had fallen on the mission. She disclosed the names of the victims, and then added, "We have need of twenty new Sisters there. Who will volunteer?" All the Sisters assembled in that hall arose without a moment's hesitation. The Superioress could not keep back the tears at the sight. It was an easy task to get sufficient subjects for the new expedition, and it was considered almost a slight, by those generous souls, not to be named among that number.

Young men, had not these women a beloved country? Their generosity simply amounts to this, and let it be said to their great honor, these unknown heroines understood better, perhaps, than many of us, the love of Christ and the surrender of one's

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whole self to Him. Does not this incident recall the fact that on Calvary there was but one representative of the apostolate, while *there were many women?* [1]

I salute you, noble heroines of our Faith, whom all men, without distinction of race or creed, admire and revere. You are an object of admiration to the very angels, whose purity and pious ministries you are trying to imitate. You are a source of great pleasure to the eyes of the Master, you, who by your self-sacrifice have caused Him to show mercy to so many poor souls, for whom you have sacrificed your noble lives. You are a delight to the eyes of your Celestial Spouse, white lilies of purity, planted among the thorns of a profligate and pagan world. You cause Him to cry out, *As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters.*[2] Would that the world understood you better! Would that it might see the supernatural beauty of your Christian heroism!

In view of this, who that hears the voice of our Lord will regret leaving his native land? What a beautiful thing it is, men of God, to see in every man a brother, and to find yourselves at home in every part of the earth, for you belong absolutely to our Lord, to whom all the earth is subject. *The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof: the world and all they that dwell therein.*[3] In an especial manner the earth belongs to priests, because they are the ministers of Christ, to whom it was said, *I will give thee the Gentiles for thy inheritance and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession.*[4] Therefore who will place a limit to his zeal?

[1] Matt. xxvii. 55.
[2] Cant. ii. 2.
[3] Psalms xxiii. 1.
[4] Psalms ii. 8.

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DINNER TIME AT ST. VINCENT'S ORPHANAGE, NING-PO, CHINA

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In fine, if it is praiseworthy to be attached to one's native land, then surely to leave this land for a noble end, and to make the people whom we wish to evangelize, know and honor it, is certainly a more praiseworthy act.

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Chapter XI

CLIMATE

And whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel, shall save it. *Mark* **viii. 35.**

And we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. *I John* **iii. 16.**

One reason that keeps men from becoming missionaries is the fear of facing disease and perhaps a premature death. It is true that very often an unhealthful climate, over-work and the changed conditions of living, subject the missionary to frequent danger, and sometimes even shorten his life. Like the Apostle to the Gentiles, he often finds himself in danger of death because of his vocation, *In deaths often.*[1] However, this apprehension, this fear of losing one's health should not deter any one from this holy undertaking. No one's zeal should grow cold on this account, and keep him from following a divine vocation, in which to die is to succeed, to fall is to conquer.

But you have not so learned Christ,[2] the apostle would say if some one were tempted to turn back on account of this fear. Certainly one who is in such fear of disease and death is not fit to face the struggles of the apostolate, which are frequently bloody. The missionary, who has been educated in the school of Jesus Christ, knows that the Church was builded upon the cruel death of its Divine Founder

[1] II. Cor. xi. 23. [2] Eph. iv. 20.

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and of the Holy Apostles, and he knows also that his is the great honor of laying the foundation of future churches among the heathen, which foundation will not be solid unless cemented by his sweat and blood. He has learned that *Unless the grain of wheat falling into the ground die, itself remaineth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.*[1]

It is unnecessary to exaggerate things in the least. If the climate of many missions is unlike that of Europe, we must remember that others have just the same conditions of climate as our own. True indeed, the heat of many regions is enervating and requires great precaution. On the other hand it agrees with many constitutions, and they adapt themselves so well to it that they find it preferable to that of their own country. Experience teaches us that delicate constitutions are better able to stand the fatigues of the apostolate, and to sustain them for a longer time than those which are more robust. We have many proofs of this, but I recall at present simply one testimony. It is that of the late Mons. Rocco Tornatore, the most zealous Vicar Apostolic of Eastern Burmah.

In his youth he was so delicate that he could not attend the lectures of the Seminary. He died after forty years of awful drudgery in evangelizing the Cariane tribes.

Do many of the priests at home reach the age of seventy years? No, they die at home at as early an age as in the mission field. Some years ago, I was given the painful duty of announcing to a family the sudden death of a beloved son. He died of typhoid in one of our Chinese missions where he had spent

[1] John xii. 24, 25.

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but a few months. When I arrived at the home I found a brother of the deceased, a young man in the prime of life, dying of the same dread disease, and a few days later he followed his missionary brother to his eternal reward.

The European, who is destined by Providence to be a master, a civilizer of all people, seems to have inherited a constitution that enables him to acclimatize himself to every country on the face of the globe. He thrives as well in the island of Ceylon as in Alaska. There is not a single climate that disheartens him. Then why should a soul who loves Jesus Christ be terrified when he is invited to go forth and promote His glory? Why should he refuse to sacrifice for the love of God what so many think nothing of doing for the sake of material interests? Who should think less of his life — the secular, in promoting his temporal affairs, or in satisfying a passion, a caprice for scientific research, a desire for glory — or the minister of the gospel, in bringing the grace of salvation to so many neglected souls?

O noble soul of Xavier, who will inspire us with a little of your courage? Determined to preach the gospel to the inhabitants of the island of Moro, he was urged by his friends not to expose himself to the storms of those seas in which shipwrecks are so frequent, nor to face the well-known ferocity of the islanders, prone to betray those who have befriended them, and pierce them with poisoned arrows. The Saint asked, with his customary self-composure, if these islands were not sometimes visited by merchants who went there to sell their wares, and when they

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admitted that such was the case, Xavier, his face suffused with righteous indignation, cried out, "Shall not he who carries the inestimable gems of the gospel, have courage to go where men of the world betake themselves for vile gain?" And immediately he prepared to set out on his journey.

Of course, my dear friends, there are always many of the worldly-wise to discourage you, and to tell you that you are in duty bound to look after your health, that you can find much to do here at home, and that by going to distant countries, where the climate is so unhealthful, and there are so many hardships to be endured, you are running to a violent or, at least, a premature death. They will say, "Look at the missionaries returning from the missions! Browned with the sun, wasted with fever, they look like walking corpses. Read the obituary notices of any Institution for the Missions, and see how many young lives are sacrificed, victims of those dangerous climates."

Far be it from me to minimize the difficulties of the apostolic life, or to picture things different from the reality. In these pages you will find little poetry, although the subject admits of some. I have tried to tell you the plain facts of the case. Now, what will you answer when some of your wise counselors offer these objections? Tell them that you are entering the mission work because you feel moved with a desire to do something for Jesus Christ. Tell them that suffering was the first thing that our Lord proposed to the great missionary St. Paul, *For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.*[1] What kind of a missionary would you make

[1] Acts ix. 16.

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if the Cross had no attraction for you, if you were not thoroughly persuaded of the truth of these words: *For I think that God hath set forth us apostles, the last, as it were men appointed to death?*[1] Tell them that the accounts of the missionaries, instead of discouraging you, have animated you with greater zeal, and filled you with a deep veneration, as if you were in the presence of the bodies of martyrs. Tell them finally that you will go and work as long as our Lord gives you strength, and that you hope to work a long time, because while some missionaries die before they have reached old age, there are many others who live as long in the mission field as they would at home. You wish to become a missionary that you may be able to say, *For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain.*[2]

Is there not in death itself a great reward? Listen to what the illustrious Bishop Dupanloup says: "I had not the calling or the strength of character to become a missionary, but I would not think of dissuading those who willingly dedicate themselves to the work. While it is true that they go into the mission field to help their fellowmen even unto death, yet, as a matter of fact, they are not entirely disinterested. Each one has his desire for glory, and his ambition. The intrepid soldier throws himself into the thickest of the fight and receives a medal of honor. The missionary hastens to the most dangerous places, frequently to martyrdom itself, and God gives him heaven as his reward. I find it impossible to commiserate him. Then, too, a generous death always bears fruit. It makes one certain of the result of his undertaking. We oppose the shedding of the blood of

[1] I Cor. iv. 9. [2] Philip. i. 21.

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thousands of soldiers because they go to the front *to kill* their fellowmen, but we find no fault with the voluntary and heroic immolation of the missionary, for he goes forth *to save* his fellowmen."

The road chosen by the apostles for the extension of the kingdom of their Master is bathed in blood. Calvary rises before them at every step, at every cross-road, in the city and in the country, on the mountains and in the plains, in the scorching deserts, and in the shade of the forests, upon the shores of the sea, and in the innermost recesses of the land. There is ever need of martyrs. Hence everywhere and always the law of the shedding of blood governs the progressive march of the Faith down through the centuries. Christ dies at all times and in all places, not only a mystical death by the renewal of His sacrifice under the appearances of bread and wine, but He dies through the sufferings, the agonies and the death of His apostles. The work of the apostolate is such that he is the best missionary who suffers most for the cause. Even if he dies he conquers, just as Jesus Christ, who sent him.

Our Faith is propagated in direct proportion to the amount of suffering and sacrifice of the missionaries. The reason of this fact is that the sacrifice of one's life for others is such a proof of sincerity that neither God nor man can resist it. God must be merciful, and men cannot resist conversion. History shows that every persecution is followed by many conversions, and it is the blood of martyrs that brings them about. People cannot be indifferent to the blood-shedding of the apostles of the Faith. Is not the end for which the martyrs shed their blood

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the same as that for which the missionary sacrifices his youth, in a manner more humble, but perhaps more difficult?

St. Vincent de Paul saw the first seven missionaries whom he sent to Madagascar die at the beginning of their apostolate. In the face of such disaster many prudent men (but not endowed with the prudence of the saints) endeavored to persuade him to desist from the undertaking. The Saint, however, looked at the matter in a far different light. He felt that he should continue the work because the immolation of those victims was the best possible omen of success.

Our Institute of the Missions takes great pride in the fact that it started its long necrology with the name of Father Mazzucconi, who was martyred in Oceania by the very savages whom he went to evangelize. When the Governor of Sydney offered to punish the assassins, Father Timoleone Raimondi, first bishop and vicar apostolic of Hong Kong, replied, "It is not our custom to vindicate our martyrs," and Father Poupinel, Superior of the Marists, wrote of this death: "Jesus showered a great blessing upon our growing Institute, by selecting one of our most holy priests to strengthen, by the shedding of his blood, the foundation stones of our edifice that is being built for the glory of God and the salvation of souls."

Even the neophytes appreciated this. Not quite fifty years ago, when Christianity was on the verge of destruction, a young neophyte of Cochin China fled from the village where he had witnessed the massacre of several missionaries. After walking five

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days and nights amid awful dangers, he arrived at the bishop's house, fell at his feet, almost dead with fatigue, and cried out, "God be praised, we have more martyrs." Oh the sublimity of our Faith! It must surely be the child of Heaven if it can inspire such heroism as this.

Come, therefore, generous souls (I speak to you as a missionary of the Institute of Paris), you who are anxious to participate one day in that fortune and in those dangers to which we have referred above. Come in order that your blood, mingling with that of our martyrs, may make fruitful the land that is thirsting for it, and thus bring forth the fruits of salvation and eternal life. Come, do not fear, because love is stronger than death. If, notwithstanding the desire of your soul, you feel your frail, weak nature rebelling within you, do not be frightened; this is nothing but the cunning of the devil. Thus he tries to dishearten those whose zeal he appreciates better than any one else. Do not be discouraged, your strength does not come from man, but from Jesus Christ, the King of Martyrs. Frequently they who are weakest at the first thought of the battle have been the strongest and bravest in the victory.

It is without doubt painful to nature to make the sacrifices peculiar to the missionary, and to learn to love the Cross in following Christ. Certainly the fatigues of such an arduous ministry exhaust one's strength in a short time, and even shorten a life that otherwise might be employed for a longer time in working for the good of the Church. Yet when one has a true vocation, of what value are these

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reasons if we conscientiously weigh them in the light of faith?

As a matter of fact, if the sacrifice is hard, and no one will deny it, the grace of God will assist us in making it easy. If the cross is heavy, Jesus will help us carry it, for we have taken it up with Him. And after all, what difference does it make if the life of a missionary be spent in a few years, if the number of his days here upon earth have been well occupied?

If you think that you could be of greater service to the Church and to souls by living a longer life, remember that in this case it is not the length of time, but the way you live, that counts. Bear in mind that God does not measure things as we do, and that you have been preceded in this life of sacrifice by men who in every respect were just as promising as you. Priests of exceptional ability, of whom we had every reason to predict a magnificent future, have renounced the flattering prospects that an ecclesiastical life at home offered them, and have embraced the poor, hidden life of a missionary. How many others for years and years have longed for a like happiness without being able to obtain it, on account of circumstances which they could not control. Every day we see young priests gladly renouncing most promising futures; men rich with gifts of grace and genius, loved and sought after by all, eloquent preachers who at home could fill large churches and reap an abundant harvest of souls without great effort, these men leave their native land and go in search of sheep who have never listened to the voice of the Shepherd.

In fine, let me quote the words of St. Vincent de

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Paul, addressed to his sons in urging them to make light of the difficulties which we have considered.

"We should consider ourselves fortunate, my brothers, to be able to be living examples of the fulfillment of the vocation of Jesus Christ, for who better than a missionary expresses the manner of life that characterized Christ while on earth? I speak not only of ourselves, but also of those grand apostolic laborers of different Orders who have dedicated themselves to the missions, of whom we are but a shadow.

"See how they have gone into India, China, Japan and Canada to carry on the work that Jesus Christ commenced, and which He never abandoned from the very first moment that it was assigned Him by the will of the Eternal Father. Listen to what He says to us:

"'Go, missionaries, go where I send you. See how many poor souls await you. Their salvation depends partly upon your preaching and your instruction.' We must consider this call well, my brothers, and we must follow it most scrupulously, for it means nothing else than that God has destined us to work in the missions, and to sacrifice ourselves for these distant people. In the same manner in former times our Lord destined His prophets to go into certain countries, and He did not wish them to go anywhere else. What answer will we make to God if, by any fault of ours, some of these poor souls be lost? Will not these unfortunate creatures have reason to reproach us if in any way we have been the cause of their damnation, by not going to their assistance?

"Should we not fear that God will demand an

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account of us at the hour of our death? If, on the contrary, we respond promptly and faithfully to the call of God, shall we not be justified in hoping that He will always shower His graces upon us in greater abundance? And finally, will not all those souls who have obtained their eternal salvation through our ministrations, give testimony to God of our fidelity and our zeal in their behalf?

"Perhaps," continues the Saint, "some one may fear that the work of the missions will bring nearer the hour of his death, and for this very reason lag behind, thinking that it would be a great misfortune to die a year or two sooner than he might have done, had he remained at home. To such a one I would say: 'Is it a misfortune for one journeying in a strange country to shorten his path in approaching his fatherland? Is it a misfortune for the sailor to reach port by the quickest possible route? Is it a misfortune for a faithful soul to hasten the moment when she shall see and possess her God? Tell me, should we consider it a misfortune for a missionary to hasten to enjoy that glory which his divine Master has merited by His sufferings and death?'"

Are these words hard to listen to? Another Saint will answer this: "Give me some one whose heart is on fire with love and he will understand what I say . . . if I speak to one who is cold and indifferent, he does not know whereof I speak."[1]

[1] St. Augustine, xxvi. tract on John.

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CHAPTER XII

PERSONAL DEFICIENCIES — NEW LANGUAGES — PRIVATIONS

The least shall become a thousand and a little one a most strong nation. ***Isaias* lx. 22.**

IN this chapter we shall consider briefly other difficulties which may present themselves to young men aspiring to become missionaries.

"Can I be of any use on the missions? Shall I be able to learn those difficult languages? How can I ever adapt myself to such a hard life?" Let us first consider the objection suggested by pusillanimity or perhaps too great modesty. This may be called the gravest of the three.

"Have I the courage, the force of character, and ability to become a successful missionary?" When a young man decides to become a missionary, even if he is already a priest, he is not sent immediately into the mission field, but is kept for some time in a missionary training school to finish that special preparation which is indispensable for such an undertaking. Thus, while he is preparing himself for the great work, his Superiors will be able to judge his vocation, and note his ability and aptitude for the work.

If a young man is received into an Institution for the Missions, and if he is really sent to work in the field, he need not wonder any longer whether he will be able to succeed. The presumption is in his favor,

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for certainly his Superiors, before accepting him, will have well tested his vocation.

Hence I say to a young man who doubts that he has the necessary qualifications for this work, "After you have prayed long and fervently, after you have taken counsel with some man of God, go to the Director of the Institution, lay before him your supposed deficiencies, physical and moral, and leave the whole matter to his judgment."

The Church never sends forth her young soldiers without first seeing that they are properly armed for the battle. When a missionary prepares to leave the Seminary to battle with the enemy, he is solemnly armed with the invincible weapon and the impenetrable shield of the Crucifix. He listens to the following words:

"Behold, O son, the inseparable companion of your apostolic journey! Behold your support in dangers and hardships! Trustworthy, unfailing friend, no less in life than in death!" "Oh, what an impression those solemn words made upon me," wrote a missionary some days after his departure. "They at once inspired me with such courage that I thought I should die discontented if it were my lot to die merely a martyr, and not upon a cross, as did Jesus Christ." The crucifix is everything to the missionary. It is his strength, his comfort, his exemplar, his courage, the inspiration of every success. The crucifix is the unfolding of the missionary life, and without it we cannot even form an idea of such a life. You see, therefore, with such good company, if it is God who calls you, there is no reason to fear. He forbids you to vacillate: *Say not: I*

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am a child; for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I shall command thee, thou shalt speak. Be not afraid . . . for I am with thee, to deliver thee, saith the Lord.[1]

Men use powerful means in the accomplishment of their works. Our Lord, on the contrary, in order to show His power, and that man may not foolishly glory in anything he has done, uses the weakest instrument and the most insignificant means, in the accomplishment of the greatest acts of His mercy. Therefore we have no cause to fear. Indeed the more convinced we are of our inability, and the more we trust to His assistance, the more efficient instruments we shall become in His hands. St. Paul expresses this very clearly: *For see your vocation, brethren, that there are not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble. But the foolish things of the world hath God chosen that he may confound the wise.*[2]

I can see St. Peter, that poor fisherman of Galilee, arriving in Rome, and I can hear him confidently announcing his mission of conquering the whole Empire for Christ — for One who was crucified but a year before in Jerusalem, by the sentence of a Roman governor. Upon hearing him, the Romans must have said, "This is surely the last of those crazy fanatics," yet after three centuries of the most cruel persecutions, and without the slightest favor from the government or from any other source, Christ Crucified was the officially recognized God, loved and served by most of the Roman Empire. Therefore you have every reason to take courage. Once you are authorized

[1] Jer. i. 7, 8. [2] I Cor. i. 26, 27.

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and blessed by the Church, your mission is the same as that of St. Peter, for He who sent him, sends you also, because the work of converting the world has not yet been accomplished.

You ask what you can accomplish among so many millions of infidels, when the number of missionaries is so small. It is very true that the number is exceedingly small, but let me remind you that it will be one less without you. One single missionary animated by the spirit of Jesus Christ can do a great deal. Was not Judith, unaided, able to bring confusion and disorder into the camp of Holofernes? *One Hebrew woman hath made confusion in the house of King Nabuchodonosor.*[1] Was not the youth David able to defeat the entire army of the Philistines by slaying Goliath? Why? Because God was with them.

Perhaps, in recalling some youthful levity, you will say, "Am I the proper material for a missionary?" Note the words of Paul III addressed to St. Francis Xavier upon setting out for India: "Go in the name of God. Do not worry because you are weak, for God strengthens His chosen ones. What were those twelve fishermen that they should become Apostles? How many provinces were brought to the knowledge of the gospel by St. Thomas! Take up your work then without fear of the difficulties that await you." [2]

But if you wish a more authoritative assurance than I can give, read the words of Monsignor Demuid, Director of the Work of the Holy Childhood, and I am sure that every possible doubt will disappear.

"*Go ye into the whole world and preach the Gospel*

[1] Judith xiv. 16. [2] Le Grégeois, *Vita.*

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to every creature.[1] In that very moment the apostolate was created. The word that Christ then pronounced was not a human word. It was the word of Him who said, *My word . . . shall not return to me void.*[2] This divine command not only opened new horizons to the zeal of the Apostles, but also communicated a new grace and strength to their souls.

"When God calls any one to a special mission in the Church, He gives, together with the grace of vocation, the skill, the inclination, and the sentiments necessary to correspond to it. The very moment that the Saviour tells His Apostles to go and announce the gospel to the nations, by an act of His divine and fruitful word, He opens their souls to new thoughts and inspires them with greater zeal to labor among those unknown brothers for whom they will in future be responsible. In a few days they will be invested with an extraordinary grace, which, by enlightening their souls and inflaming their hearts, will enable them to undertake everything, face every difficulty, suffer all manner of tortures and hardships, in order to follow the impulse they have received from on High. *But you shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you, and you shall be witnesses unto me . . . even to the uttermost part of the earth.*"[3]

Our second difficulty is that of learning a new language. Can you not do what others have done? It is true that the missionaries of to-day are not blessed with the gift of tongues, as were the Apostles. We can, however, in a certain manner, say that the gift

[1] Mark xvi. 15. [2] Isaias lv. 11.
[3] Acts i. 8. Sermon at Lyons, 1898.

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of tongues is still found in the Catholic apostolate. For it is true, that of all people, Catholic missionaries are the only ones who speak every language under the sun. God blesses the efforts of those who apply themselves and endeavor to learn. The necessity of expressing oneself, the desire to be of assistance as soon as possible in the ministry, the obligation of living in such close contact with the people whose language you are anxious to learn, the practice with one's fellow-missionaries, are all efficacious means at the disposal of new missionaries. Hence, in a relatively short time, they succeed in learning the most difficult idioms.

If one applies himself assiduously to the work, generally a year suffices to enable him to hear confessions and to preach in the new language. Even he who is not blessed with a very good memory, by careful application and with a little patience, can succeed almost as well as the rest. Perhaps he who is called at the ninth or eleventh hour, and is somewhat advanced in years, may have more reason to be troubled on this point; and yet while a man of thirty has not as good a memory as one who is younger, still he has no reason to lose courage. We know that the Jesuit missionaries, who are usually older than others, succeed in learning the most difficult languages as well and even better than younger men.

Besides there are grammars, dictionaries, and other books for almost all these languages. These offer facilities that were unknown in times gone by, when it was necessary to learn the language from the natives. This latter method meant great labor and loss of time. Our Lord, who *opened the mouth of the*

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dumb, and made the tongues of infants eloquent,[1] and who promised His disciples that *they shall speak with new tongues,*[2] always gives assistance to His chosen ones in this particular phase of their preparation for the missions. *The Lord shall give the word to them that preach good tidings with great power.*[3]

Beseleel, whose skill was very great in the erection of the material tabernacle of the Lord, was *filled . . . with the spirit of God, with wisdom and understanding and knowledge in all manner of work.*[4] Now, how much more should he who is preparing living tabernacles of the Holy Ghost, expect abundant gifts of grace and genius from the same Divine Spirit? *I have put wisdom in the heart of every skillful man that they may make all things which I have commanded thee.*[5]

In regard to the difficulty of adapting oneself to a life of great drudgery and privations, without even the ordinary conveniences of life, such as proper food and a comfortable bed, I think that the answer given by a missionary of distant Oceania to the dear ones at home, will serve us.

"The hardships which from a distance seemed unendurable, in reality are not so very difficult for one who is willing to give himself up entirely to the cause, and seek only God's honor and glory. You remember, for example, how dainty I used to be. Now I am content with conditions which would have made me sick a few months ago. I go to sleep upon a piece of straw matting, and I never remove my clothes; but what merit is it for me, since I sleep like a top

[1] Wisdom x. 21. [2] Mark xvi. 17. [3] Psalms lxvii. 12.
[4] Exod. xxxi. 3. [5] Exod. xxxi. 6.

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and experience no mortification whatever? One soon finds that it is not so difficult as many imagine to become accustomed to privations and dangers, and to be willing to face death itself."

On this same question a Korean Bishop says:

"Were you to sit down at a missionary table, one would see immediately that the food was not agreeable to you. In fact, it would be a great surprise if it were to your liking. You would exclaim at once, 'How can you stand it!' But you forget that custom and the grace of vocation enable us to endure what would be unbearable to others. Besides, there are helps that you would not be apt to think of at all. Owing to our active life, the simplest food, such as rice, salt fish, and green herbs, is very palatable.

"You would marvel as well at our improvised accommodations for sleeping and wonder how we were able to rest at night. As a matter of fact, a hard straw matting makes a very comfortable bed for a missionary. If you were to rise early in the morning and spend your day traveling over the mountains in the exercise of your ministry, without taking any rest until ten o'clock at night, you would sleep very soundly and would not even notice the absence of a mattress. Therefore, my dear friends, do not give any thought to our privations, and if some day your sons should be called by God to save souls in heathen lands, do not mind how much they will have to suffer."

And I say to you, dear reader, if you feel inspired to become a missionary, do not mind the inconveniences. Youth adapts itself easily to all things, and the material hardships are the least worry of the

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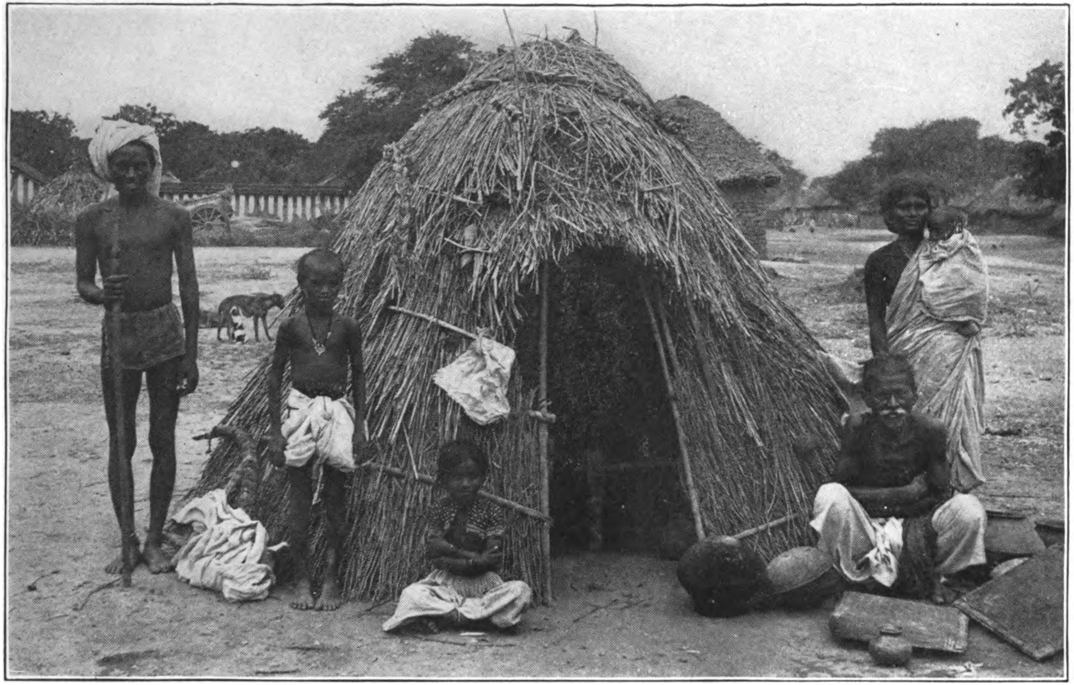

Christian Family and their Home at Madras, India

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missionary, because, after all, there is no suffering for those who are accustomed to the situation, and it is possible to get used to almost anything. The missionary, more easily than others, is able to practise a total detachment from the world. In his zeal to procure the glory of God and the salvation of souls, and separated as he is from the civilized world, he is able to get along with few conveniences.

He knows well that, in the order of Providence, *they who preach the gospel, should live by the gospel;*[1] but lest he should be accused of working for his own interests, he is loath to accept from his flock sufficient alms to live comfortably. Hence very often he gets along as best he can with the limited allowance that the faithful at home send him. With St. Paul, he can say, *I have used none of these things. . . . What is my reward then? That preaching the gospel I may deliver the gospel without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel.*[2] *I have not coveted any man's silver, gold, or apparel, as you yourselves know.*[3] All this means a life of sacrifice and privations, but I assure you it counts very little with one whose only occupation is to bring souls to Christ. Cold and heat, hunger and thirst, poverty and hardships of every sort, everything that is most difficult and disagreeable, he is ready to meet, in order to save one soul. Just as fourteen years of service seemed a short time to Jacob for the hand of the beautiful Rachel, *and they seemed but a few days because of the greatness of his love,*[4] so to the missionary, for the conquest of one soul, the long life of

[1] I Cor. ix. 14.
[2] I Cor. ix. 15, 18.
[3] Acts xx. 33, 34.
[4] Gen. xxix. 20.

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study, of trials and misfortunes, of voyages and dangers of every description seems as naught.

Wonderful indeed is the character of the missionary. For the love of a soul he adapts himself to all climates, to all countries, to all manners and customs. He speaks every language under the sun. A Jew among Jews, a Gentile among Gentiles, he transforms himself in every way, in order to gain admission into the hearts of his brothers and win them over to the Faith, and to God. As St. Paul says, *For whereas I was free as to all, I made myself the servant of all, that I might gain the more. And I became to the Jews as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews. . . . To the weak I became weak, that I might gain the weak. I became all things to all men, that I might save all.*[1] Of him, as of Jesus, his Master, we may say, he was *made in the likeness of men.*[2]

Animated with great charity, the missionary knows how to strip himself of almost every mark of civilization. He adopts willingly distasteful customs, dress, and food in order to bring souls to Christ. He does more than that. He respects their prejudices, puts up with their rough manners that are very repugnant to his innate refinement, and never complains of the indifference and insult with which he and his works are often received. He exposes himself to diseases of all kinds, and embraces with joy even martyrdom itself. Egoism and worldly prudence are unknown to him. Nothing is impossible to him. There is no limit to his charity.

I can hear you say, "One might endure all this for a time, but to live forever in the society of people

[1] I Cor. ix. 19, 20, 22. [2] Philip. ii. 7.

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so low and degraded, to pass one's days among barbarians and cannibals, among those who are infected with leprosy and other revolting diseases, among savages who are filthy and dirty, is beyond us." It is true — we must go and live with these people, but does their very misery not give them a strong title to our charity? Do you believe that when the Son of God became man and exchanged heaven for earth, He came to the most inviting and agreeable society? Are these souls to be left in their wretched state, when it is in our power to save them? Frequently those who labor among these unfortunate people are rewarded with consolations that are unknown to priests in civilized communities. Under a black skin the missionary sees a soul that is dear to God, a soul that was created for Heaven and redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ.

Listen in conclusion to the beautiful words of St. John Chrysostom: "Be careful not to despise any of those people. . . . Let us imitate our Lord. Let us do everything that will help our brethren, even those things that are very humiliating and hard to bear; and if there is need of our assistance, even though they to whom we minister are mean and abject, and our duties are fraught with great labor, I pray that we may have the strength to endure them for the sake of saving a brother's soul. God Himself showed us the value of an immortal soul when He would not even spare His divine Son to win it to Himself."[1]

[1] Hom. lx. in Matt.

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Chapter XIII

OUR PARENTS

But when it pleased him who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the gentiles, immediately I condescended not to flesh and blood. *Gal.* i. 15, 16.

LET us now take up the difficulty of difficulties. "In vain," says Father Bouvier, S. J., "we tried from the very beginning to restrain the enthusiasm which seemed transitory. In vain we used our utmost means to test these sublime vocations; they disconcerted us by the great manifestation of faith with which their answers were inspired, by the generosity of their sentiments, and by the strength and tenacity of their resolutions. 'Those people,' we said, 'are coarse and repellant, ignorant even to stupidity, cruel and barbarous. They will have no gratitude for your sacrifices and zeal.' 'That makes no difference,' they replied. 'It is precisely because they are buried so deep in ignorance and barbarity that we hasten to assist them. Jesus Christ loves them. The Church seeks them. They lack only apostles to convert them, and we wish to be the instruments of divine grace among them. We are eager to give this joy to Jesus, and this consolation to the Church.'

"'You have been carried away by the most deceptive illusions,' we added. 'What can you accomplish, in view of the obstinacy of those people who

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are as insensible to your plea as the rocks that form their coast, and as ferocious as the wild beasts that rove about in their forests? They will salute you on your arrival as a rare morsel to be served at their inhuman orgies, and thus, urged on by your excessive love of sacrifice, you will have left your native land, only to be served up at a banquet of cannibals.'

"But these prospects, far from frightening them, only stimulated their zeal, and brought forth answers worthy of the early Christians. 'The more cruel those people are, the more we will have to gain in trying to win them over to the Faith. If we succeed in making them bow down before the Cross, the triumph will be more meritorious. If we are put to death, we shall win the palm branch of the martyr, and that is the greatest honor that our ambition holds out to us.'

"Even after these sublime declarations, we did not give up, but exposed before them the instruments of torture used upon those who have already received the martyr's crown. We collected in a sort of museum [1] whatever instruments of martyrdom and relics of martyrs we could procure. We hung on the walls the chains that bound them, the clubs that battered them, the pincers that tore them, the hatchets with which they were decapitated, and after they had examined all these things, do you know what they said?

"'Now, nothing will keep us from the field. We have raised these chains, we have lifted up these clubs, we have gazed upon these horrible instruments, we

[1] The "Hall of Martyrs," Seminary of Foreign Missions, Paris.

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have kissed these torn habits bathed in blood, and now more than ever do we burn with a desire to share the glory of those heroes. Angels of heaven, hasten to lead us to the place where the tempest rages most violently, and bring back to our mothers in exchange for their sons the remains of martyrs, which will be a source of glory to them as long as they live.'

"Having triumphantly run the gantlet of these objections, the vocation of our missionaries was then subjected to the most formidable, and, we may say, the decisive test. Granted that this vocation is a glory to every Christian family, we must remember that the prospects of separation, without any possibility of return, will be sure to bring about heart-rending consequences. How many mothers, unable to overcome their emotion, have disputed God's right to take the son whom, in His providence, He has honored with such a lofty calling!

"'Is this the recompense,' she says, 'for all my sacrifices and love? At least you will wait a little while. I am growing old, and have not long to live. Do not deprive me, in my old age, of the consolation of thinking that you will be by my side at my last hour to close my eyes, and say a few prayers at my grave.'

"This moment is, without doubt, the most difficult in the life of a missionary. He finds himself between two loves, which, up to the present, have been in perfect harmony, — the call and the love of his God; the pleading and the love of his mother. Now, above all times, he finds his courage weakening, but fortified by God's grace he remains firm, and recalling the words of our Lord in the gospel, *He that loveth father*

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or mother more than me is not worthy of me,[1] says, 'I must first obey God,' and then repeats the motto of Joan of Arc, 'Even if I had a hundred fathers and a hundred mothers, I would go where our Lord sends me.' Strengthened by the grace of God, he succeeds in making clear to his dear ones that he will submit only to the Divine Call."[2]

I have called the question in hand the difficulty of difficulties, because it is in reality the hardest to overcome. It is very hard for a man to do violence to his own heart in deciding to leave all those near and dear to him. Frequently he is obliged to struggle with them when they absolutely prohibit the carrying out of his holy determination. How many vocations have been retarded, how many have been lost, through the opposition of a father or mother! Truly in such a case, *A man's enemies shall be they of his own household.*[3] It is, without doubt, very hard to be separated forever from one's family, to be unable to hasten to their death-bed, and to have their assistance and comfort in the time of sickness and in the dark days of one's life. It is truly difficult to renounce by a single act of your will everything that binds you to your family. It is hard to give up the assiduous care and kind interest of a devoted mother or of an affectionate sister. It is painful to be separated from them forever, to be deprived of their loving companionship. The approach of the hour of this final separation is dreadful, for it grieves one exceedingly to see so many hearts sad and heavy, and to have them think that this act of sacrifice is but a caprice or

[1] Matt. x. 37.
[2] Discours, Lyon, 10 Janvier, 1899.
[3] Matt. x. 36.

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a momentary exaltation of spirit. It is mortifying to the last degree to be considered without a heart and void of affection. What a great sacrifice all this is, but the apostolic life demands it. It is the first step on the road to Calvary, and to the winning of a celestial crown.

Jesus Christ, the most perfect missionary, has shown us how to overcome this difficulty. When, at the age of twelve years, without the knowledge of His mother and St. Joseph, he remained in the temple to look after the interests of His Heavenly Father, what answer did He give to the sweet admonition of His loving mother? *How is it that you sought me? Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business?*[1] Here is the response that you also must give. Here is the rule that must guide you in overcoming this supreme difficulty.

Remember that during the three years of His public life, Christ separated Himself from His Blessed Mother, precisely to teach those who in the course of time were to follow Him, how they were to bring about this perfect detachment from the dear ones at home. We never read of His ever having turned back to find her during that time. On the other hand, we do read that one time when He was preaching, He was interrupted by some one who announced the presence of His mother and His brethren. He gave the following reply: *Who is my mother, and who are my brethren? And stretching forth his hand towards his disciples, he said: Behold my mother and my brethren. For whosoever shall do the will of my father that is in heaven, he is my brother, and sister, and mother.*[2]

[1] Luke ii. 49.

[2] Matt. xii. 48–50.

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What is the meaning of this conduct and this teaching? Was it not given for the benefit of those who aspire to the apostolate, to show them how they must restrain their natural affections when the will of our Lord has called them to follow Him?

To every young man who finds himself at the parting road where he must follow either the voice of nature or that of the Saviour, Christ says: "Yes, it is hard to abandon one's family; but this sacrifice which I impose upon you, I first imposed upon myself. I also left my mother, and I loved her more than you can ever love yours, but when there was question of doing the will of my Heavenly Father, and of giving an example to you, I left her and even inflicted upon her the suffering of my passion. Do you likewise." *For I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you do also.*[1] This chalice which our Lord offers you to drink upon entering His service, is indeed bitter, but remember that He partook of it first, and thousands and thousands of apostles have partaken of it before you. They found it much sweetened by the grace of God, and so it will be with all the sacrifices that are accepted voluntarily for God's sake. Do you believe that our Divine Saviour who is so generous will forget to recompense even in this life the sorrow of your father, the tears of your mother, and the agony of your own heart? How sweet is the balm which the Divine Consoler abundantly pours into hearts that are saddened through love of Him, into hearts that accept with resignation the Cross from His hands.

Listen to the beautiful promises that have been

[1] John xiii. 15.

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made especially for you, and recorded in the holy gospels. *And every one that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother . . . for my name's sake, shall receive an hundred-fold, and shall possess life everlasting.*[1] The same sentiment is even more expressive in St. Mark: *Amen I say to you, there is no man who hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or children, or lands for my sake and for the gospel, who shall not receive an hundred times as much, now in this time; houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions, and in the world to come life everlasting.*[2]

Such, my dear young friends, are the magnificent promises which our Lord makes to those who know how to leave everything and follow Him, and how many there are in the last twenty centuries that have faithfully followed Him, and have learned that the fidelity of our Lord to generous souls far surpasses His promises.

The sight of a father and mother bidding farewell to a dear son who is leaving them for the missions certainly moves one to compassion. It is a renewal of the sacrifice of Abraham. We think, however, that the misfortune of those people whom he goes to succor, calls for even more compassion, and the fact that he goes to carry redemption to these people and to open for them the gates of heaven, is surely a worthy motive to inspire such sacrifice. If our Lord deigns to choose a son (who after all is His, and whom He could at any time snatch away by death), and if the Holy Spirit has inflamed his heart with a

[1] Matt. xix. 29. [2] Mark x. 29, 30.

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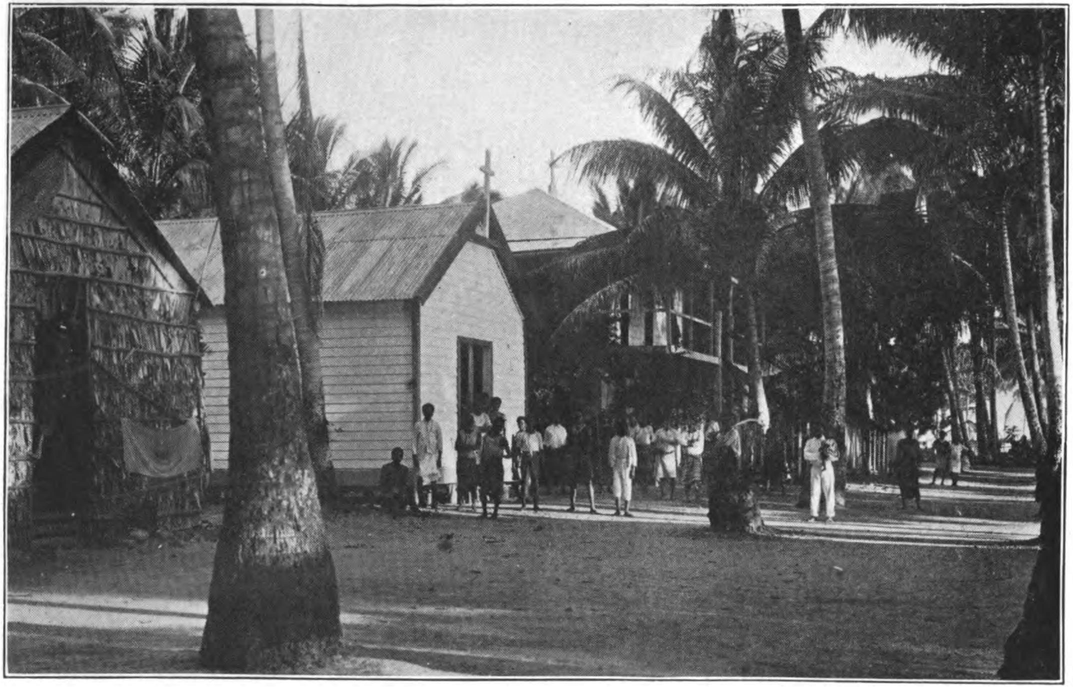

After Sunday School at Rua Suva, Solomon Islands

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spark of that divine fire which took possession of the hearts of the apostles, in the upper chamber on Pentecost Sunday, who will dare to dispute His holy will?

Young men, when you are trying to persuade your parents, who perhaps are opposing your generous determination, show them how grand your sacrifice is in the eyes of God, and in the light of faith. Make them understand that it will result in special blessings for them, and the entire family, for if sometimes He pays us the honor of demanding something from us, He always gives us much more in return. Tell them that they should consider themselves blessed and honored if the Lord has demanded from them the sacrifice of one of their children to serve Him, in preaching His gospel among the nations. Truly the parents of such children are favored. Blessed is that father from whom our Lord demands the sacrifice of a son for the missions, of a son in whom perhaps he has placed so many hopes. You remember Abraham, who in his obedience in offering his only son in sacrifice, merited the greatest possible benediction for himself and all his descendants "in perpetuum." Blessed is that mother, who, like the holy mother of Jesus, can in a great spirit of faith, make a sacrifice to God of her beloved son, and generously give him up for the salvation of so many other neglected children. Oh! the blessings that those nations to whom her son will preach the words of salvation and eternal life, will heap upon her! Just as once the multitudes cried out to Jesus, so to her son these people will say, *Blessed is the womb that bore thee, and the paps that gave thee suck.*[1]

[1] Luke xi. 27.

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It is comforting to think that to offset the selfishness that is so universal in the world, there are still some examples of generosity among Christian mothers. It is some years since I read a letter which a mother sent her beloved son the day after his departure for the missions. It began as follows:

"My dear son, yesterday, when heart-broken I said good-bye to you, and you gave me your blessing, I went into the Church and in company with our Blessed Mother, made the Stations of the Cross. I left the Church quite resigned and comforted." Now that missionary, that holy son of a profoundly Christian mother, is in Heaven.

It is said of the mother of Father Jacquard that when she received the notice of his impending martyrdom, she said, "Oh, what good news! What good fortune for our family, to count a martyr among its members! What happiness to be his mother!" Say, therefore, to your mothers with Father Bouvier, "After all, this love of God and this invincible fidelity to my duty is the result of the training I received at your knee. This very vocation is your work, and the merit is all yours." How many of our apostles could say to their mothers what a former bishop of Korea said to his pious mother, who at his departure was overcome with grief: "After all, it is your fault if I leave you. When I was a child it was upon your knee that I learned to read the 'Annals of the Propagation of the Faith,' and it was from that reading that I determined to become a missionary."

Bid them imitate those mothers who unite their sacrifice with that of their sons, giving example of the same love and the same faith. "How could I

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dare to refuse God the son whom I have so often consecrated to Him," cries out one mother. "Oh, my son," exclaims another, after some moments of reflection, "shall we not see each other in Heaven?" "Yes, mother, without a doubt, we shall meet again." "Very well, my son, go where God calls you. You have my blessing. Always think of your mother. Pray often for her. We shall meet in Heaven."

Yes, go wherever God calls you, I also say to you, predestined apostle, because there is no longer any doubt of your vocation. You are clearly marked with the sign of the Elect. *Flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven.*[1] Go wherever God calls you, and no matter where you are, never forget the sacrifice which your parents have made in letting you go. Always pray for them. Invoke God's blessing upon them. Give them the credit of some of the good that you will accomplish, because to them much of it belongs. Indeed, all the good that you will bring about in the missions should be attributed to your parents, as the fruit of their great sacrifice.

See how fondly that father and mother embrace their dear son for the last time as he is about to leave them. They do not want to keep him, but in that long final embrace is pent up all their sacrifice. They have immolated their affections for the most noble ideal of our Faith, and in this parents show themselves no less apostles than their sons. With good reason a young missionary wrote to his parents from the distant mission of Oregon:

"If you had been less generous with me I should

[1] Matt. xvi. 17.

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now be wrapped up in the affairs of the world, instead of spending my time in comforting these poor savages and in sending thousands of little angels to Heaven. Thanks a thousand times, dear parents, for all your sacrifices. God alone knows how to appreciate them, and He will not permit them to go unrewarded. In my daily Mass I pray God to guard and bless you every moment of your life."

Some one may still object and say: "All this may be true enough, but my heart must be different from others. I could not think of abandoning the dear ones at home. I do not know how I could ever live away from my mother. I think I should die. Perhaps in other families who have given missionaries to the Church, there was not such natural affection as there is in ours."

In answer to this objection, I will introduce to you in the person of the holy martyr, Théophane Vénard, a striking and most touching example of the sacrifice of a tender heart, such as it would be difficult to find among men. I do not speak now of something that took place years ago, for Théophane Vénard is a comparatively recent martyr. Indeed, he has a brother still living. We may even say that our Lord raised up this noble young man as a model of generous self-sacrifice to those who feel drawn to the life of the missions, and yet cannot overcome the above-mentioned difficulty. The characteristic of this young martyr is his tender love for his family, and yet this affection did not impede him in the least from ascending to the highest degree of sanctity. He is a most typical example of the combination of natural sentiment and God's grace. Lady Herbert,

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in the preface to her English translation of the life of this heroic man, expresses this as follows:

"Théophane Vénard was no ascetic saint, trembling at every manifestation of human or natural feeling. He was eminently a tender and dutiful son; a most devoted and loving brother; an equally devoted and attached friend. Neither did he consider these warm affections incompatible with the great work to which he had given his life. His devotion to his sister, whom he calls "part of his very life," shines through every page of this touching and beautiful correspondence. She is the first thought of his boyish years, she is his last thought in death. Yet all this strong human love did not prevent his sacrificing everything to God; leaving the home he loved so fondly, the sister he idolized, the family tie which bound him with what others might have considered iron links — everything, in fact, which made life dear — when the voice of the Master called him to go forth from his people and his country into a strange and distant land, to preach His word and do His work, and save the souls for whom He died on the Cross. This is the striking characteristic of the life before us, — human love, surpassing all ordinary home affections, willingly and joyfully offered up on the altar of our Lord for the salvation of the heathen who knew Him not."

I would suggest that every young ecclesiastic procure a copy of the life of this brave missionary and read it very attentively. He will learn much and find many things to imitate in the touching narrations and in the letters of this generous Confessor of the Faith. I cannot refrain from inserting a translation of a letter which he wrote to his beloved father, in

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which he made known his decision to enter the Seminary of Foreign Missions:

February 7, 1851.

My dearest Father, — It is a little more than a month ago that, to my great joy, you came to witness my consecration to the service of God. You, yourself, as it were, presented the victim at the altar. A poor and miserable offering indeed! yet such as it was our Lord in His infinite mercy accepted it. And since that moment how the time has flown! God guides the hearts of men, and they follow as He leads. God, as it were, took me by the hand, and spoke to me with an irresistible voice. "My son!" He said, "come, follow Me, fear nothing; you are little, and poor and weak, and miserable, but I am the Almighty God. Come, I will be with thee!" and I, can I have a will in presence of the will of God?

My dearly loved father, have you understood me? One day God said to Abraham, "Take thy only-begotten son, Isaac, whom thou lovest, and go into the land of Vision; and there thou shalt offer him for a holocaust upon one of the mountains which I shall show thee." And Abraham obeyed without a murmur, and his obedience was most pleasing to God. Now, my dearest father, do you begin to understand me? Here am I, the child whom you love; I have not borrowed a strange pen to tell you the truth. I come openly, without any subterfuges unworthy of us both. God calls me; yes, it is His call. O call me likewise; say that you, too, are willing that your Théophane should become a missionary!

Poor father! the word is said — the *Foreign Missions.* Do not let your human nature shrink from the thought. Rather kneel and take your crucifix, that crucifix which received my mother's last breath, and say, "My God, I consent, may Thy holy will be done. Amen."

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O my father, forgive me for having struck the blow myself! Some people will tell you I am mad, ungrateful, a bad son, and I know not what besides. My darling father, you will not think so! I know you have a great and generous soul, and one that has drunk deeply at the only true source of real strength and greatness — that of Religion and Faith. I have saddened your heart; my own is sorrowful and heavy, too. The sacrifice asked of us is hard — most hard! But, O Lord Jesus! since Thou dost will it, I will it likewise, and so willeth my father.

Courage, then, my dearest father — courage, and resignation and confidence in God and in His Holy Mother. Let us pray for each other. Father, I kneel at your feet. Bless your child, and believe in his respectful devotion and dutiful submission.

THÉOPHANE VÉNARD, *Sub-deacon.*

The consent of the aged father of our martyr was given in another letter which, in the lofty sentiments which inspired it, surpassed that of his son. One day when a friend tried to console him in the loss of his son, this generous Christian father exclaimed: "And what would become of the prophecy of our Lord Jesus Christ, who declared that His gospel should be preached throughout the whole earth, if directors of colleges and heads of families were to check the aspirations of all the young students who wish to embark for the foreign missions?"

To complete the picture, here are a few lines from a long letter which the youth wrote to his sister Mélanie after he had received the consent of his father:

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My darling Sister, — O, how I cried when I read your letter! Yes, I knew well the sorrow I was going to bring upon my family and especially upon you, my dear little sister. But don't you think it cost me tears of blood, too, to take such a step, and give you all such pain? Who ever cared more for home and a home life than I? All my happiness here below was centered in it. . . . O what a fight and a struggle I have had with my poor human nature! . . . And now I must add a line to my dear father. You don't know how proud I am to be his son! I long to feel myself in his arms, pressed to his heart. . . . My father, with your great courage, firm faith, burning love—all for God—even your Théophane! Dearest father, these souls that I am going to strive and win for our Lord I offer them all to you, next to God. They will be your crown and your glory in the Home of the Elect.

I am going away, but I leave you an angel of consolation — a loving guardian angel — in Mélanie.

On September 19, 1852, in the chapel of the Seminary of Foreign Missions at Paris, was celebrated the touching ceremony of the departure of five young missionaries, among whom was the future martyr, Théophane Vénard. The five young apostles were stationed at the altar step, and at the close of the ceremony their companions came forward to kiss the feet of these heralds of our Lord, while the choir sang the anthem, "Quam speciosi pedes evangelizantium pacem, evangelizantium bona!" (How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, — of them that bring glad tidings!)

"A little episode followed; from the midst of the crowd of visitors an old man came forward, walking with

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some difficulty, and assisted by one of the Directors of the College. An inexpressible emotion was felt throughout the chapel, and the voices of the choir faltered as they watched him slowly advancing up the aisle towards the altar. He kissed the feet of the first four missionaries, but when he came to the fifth, the young man, as if instinctively, bent forward and tried to prevent him. But the poor old man knelt, or rather prostrated himself before him, and not only pressed his lips to his feet, but to his face and his forehead, so that his soft white hair covered them as if with a veil; and then a sigh burst from his heart, which was more like a sob, a sigh which was heard all over the building, and at which everybody was moved to tears; while the poor son himself (for it was his father) became whiter than a sheet. Yet this was the second son which this new Abraham had sacrificed to God, and it was the last! . . . They assisted the old man to rise, and with difficulty he returned to his place amidst the sympathy of the whole audience, while the choir, which in the excitement had paused for a moment, intoned the 'Laudate pueri Dominum.'"

Nine years later Théophane Vénard was beheaded for the Faith.[1]

Young men who read these pages, I have done the best I can to smooth over the difficulties that may present themselves in the way of the desires of your heart, if you feel inclined to choose the way of the Foreign Missions; I should not say smooth over, for I have really shown them in their true light in order that you may the more easily overcome them. Remember, however, that your heart may be easily persuaded of the goodness of your purpose, and yet

[1] The above extracts of the life of Théophane Vénard are taken from "A Modern Martyr" by Lady Herbert.

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this persuasion will amount to nothing if you have not the power to put it into execution. This power you will acquire only with the help of God, who alone can give it if it is demanded of Him with fervent and incessant prayer. Behold the one and only means of overcoming all difficulties, not excepting the one that we have considered in the present chapter. Pray and you will conquer.

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CHAPTER XIV

GOOD PRIESTS ARE NEEDED AT HOME

It is a small thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob. . . . Behold, I have given thee to be the light of the Gentiles, that thou mayst be my salvation even to the farthest part of the earth. *Isaias* xlix. 6.

ALL the difficulties that stand in the way of the vocations to the missions have not yet been exhausted. We have glanced hastily at those that may be called internal, because they are so intimately related to the missioner himself. But there are others that come from without; and these are not less formidable, especially when we consider that they are proposed by people of authority, by those who are considered prudent, sometimes even by very pious souls. And thus it happens frequently that a young aspirant to the missions should, from the very beginning of his career, repeat the following words of St. Paul: *Our flesh had no rest, but we suffered all tribulation; combats without, fears within.*[1]

Those who object say it is not necessary to go so far in order to do good; they tell us they can do much good by remaining at home. "Right here in our own country we have to oppose indifferentism and even loss of faith. If we have good and zealous priests, this will be sufficient occupation for them, for a vast field is open to their zeal." What answer

[1] II Cor. vii. 5.

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shall we give to this very serious objection? It is certain that we have much to do at home, and that now more than ever our large dioceses have need of good and zealous priests. War is waged upon the Church on all sides. She has enemies within and without. The anti-clerical spirit is organized to destroy our Faith, and by means of the press, irreligious schools, unjust laws, and uprisings of the people, they are trying to do their best to destroy the Church. Consequently we must use every means in our power to save our institutions from ruin and preserve the Faith in our country. Is it right, then, in such times as these, to invite young ecclesiastics to devote their lives to the Foreign Missions? Is it right to awaken zeal in the hearts of the clergy in favor of this means of propagating the Faith?

Those prudent people who make this objection do not understand the case. We do not propose to abandon our position to the enemy. We do not wish to send *all* good priests to Asia and Africa. We wish merely to direct the attention of all to the grave problem before us, and in a few words it is this: *The establishment of the kingdom of God among the heathen.* We desire simply to stimulate *some* generous souls to dedicate themselves to the great work, and we wish to obtain the co-operation of others in a manner compatible with their duty at home.

We must remember that the Church Militant will not cease until the end of the world. War will be waged upon her under one form or another according to the caprice of the age, until time shall be no more. Poor heathen! if they are obliged to wait for missionaries until the day when peace will come to

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the Church! They will all be dead before that time. Do not these few whom we send to distant shores to preach the gospel, go to fight the enemies of the Church? Are there not error and vice and idolatry among the heathen, enemies which the Church must consider in spite of the fact that they are so far away? Are not the triumphs and victories that the missionaries win over barbarity and paganism, battles won for the Church? Let us not be discouraged at the thought of the evils that beset Christian countries. There has always been a conflict between good and evil and there always will be one, but

It will never be zeal for the diffusion of the Faith that will weaken the power of the clergy at home. In fact, the opposite is true. The preservation of the Faith among ourselves will be rewarded in exact proportion to the energy we expend in propagating it elsewhere. I will say even more. If the Faith becomes weak among ourselves, perhaps it is a punishment for our lack of zeal in propagating and diffusing it among the poor heathen. That great light of the Church, Cardinal Manning, wrote:

"I am convinced that it is just on account of the fact that we have need of missionaries at home that we should send missionaries abroad. In exact proportion to our generosity in giving what we have so liberally received, our undertakings at home will flourish and the zeal and number of our priests will be multiplied. This is the proof and measure of our Catholicity. *The apostolic spirit is the condition of our progress.*"

These assertions may seem paradoxical to superficial minds, but not to him who has the grace to see

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the depth of their meaning. People are impressed more by great examples of faith than by preaching. Missionaries by their magnanimity, by their detachment from the world, by their righteous lives, and by martyrdom, give wonderful examples of faith to all about them, and these examples exert an influence not only on the heathen, but also on those at home, so in reality the missionary is not wholly lost to his own country.

Here are the words of the Venerable Mons. Marinoni, for forty years Director of the Seminary of Foreign Missions at Milan. He had much experience in combating the prejudices we are now considering.

"Sometimes there are good people who weep over the departure of missionaries as if the treasure of the Faith had gone with them. Away with such vain fears! The noble work and the generosity of these men render the Faith dearer to all, for their magnanimous examples are never without fruit.

"The apostle of the Gentiles, anxious to inspire his brother Jews with great admiration for the gospel, to which they had closed their ears, preached to the Gentiles. For he hoped that the example of their conversion and fervor might arouse in the Jews, who were the first to be called, a spirit of holy emulation, and open their eyes to the inestimable jewels that they had permitted to be snatched from their hands. Did the preaching of the great St. Francis Xavier have its effect in India alone? Did not the great multitude of converts that he made among idolatrous people help to convert Europe also and to refute the calumnies of Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, and Henry

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VIII who dared to accuse the Church of sterility, and say that she was falling into decay?

"Does not the mere reading of the Annals, filled with such interesting stories and information about missionary life, serve to awaken the faith that lies dormant in many souls? These letters written by missionaries, sometimes the moment before their martyrdom, are most impressive. Now they call us to assist at the torture and death of generous Christians who give to Christ the supreme proof of their love. Again they depict the fervor of a recent convert and the wonderful change that has been worked by the grace of God in the hearts of whole tribes. Or they show us a savage who at the point of death stretches himself out in his little canoe and is carried hundreds of miles over rivers and lakes in search of a missionary who will administer to him the last rites and comforts of his holy religion. It is also interesting to read, in their characteristic native style, the sentiments of the new converts who salute with joy their European brothers and thank them for their charitable assistance, invoking upon them at the same time thousands of blessings from on high. Are not these letters more eloquent than any learned discourse, and do they not touch one's heart? These missionaries continually writing home for assistance, and describing their sufferings, their hopes and fears, speak to all people a language of faith and of love, whose force it is difficult to resist."[1]

A vocation to the missions in these times of universal egoism and selfishness has a good effect even upon those at home. It is comforting to see that

[1] *Scritti vari* di Mons. G. Marinoni.

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there are still men who sacrifice all their hopes for material advancement to dispense God's mercy to abandoned humanity. The vocation to the Foreign Missions tells us that in the fever of material gain, of ambition, and of the insatiable thirst for pleasure which is so universal in our day, there are still privileged souls who are magnanimous enough to raise themselves above this sordid world, and to so far forget themselves that they have but one idea in life, *the love of God and of their neighbor.* Courageously and quietly they face labor, hardships, suffering, dangers of every kind, to go forth to elevate and save their brethren. Who is not stimulated with zeal at such a spectacle?

Against the lack of faith we must place great examples of strong faith. Atheism, armed with unheard-of sophisms, is overcome better by deeds than by words. How frequently the account of a missionary enduring hardships and even martyrdom is more convincing than an elaborate sermon by a great orator. We may argue for hours with those who have lost the Faith, and after we have finished they are as indifferent and insensible to their loss as before we began.

The Catholic missionary is one of the few religious persons to-day who commands respect from modern unbelievers. Will not the suffering of these missionaries, if given deep consideration, increase the zeal of the priests at home, and will it not thus compensate for the lack of those who go to the missions? It may even be said that aspirants to the Foreign Missions before evangelizing the pagans, first evangelize those at home, by the spectacle of their gen-

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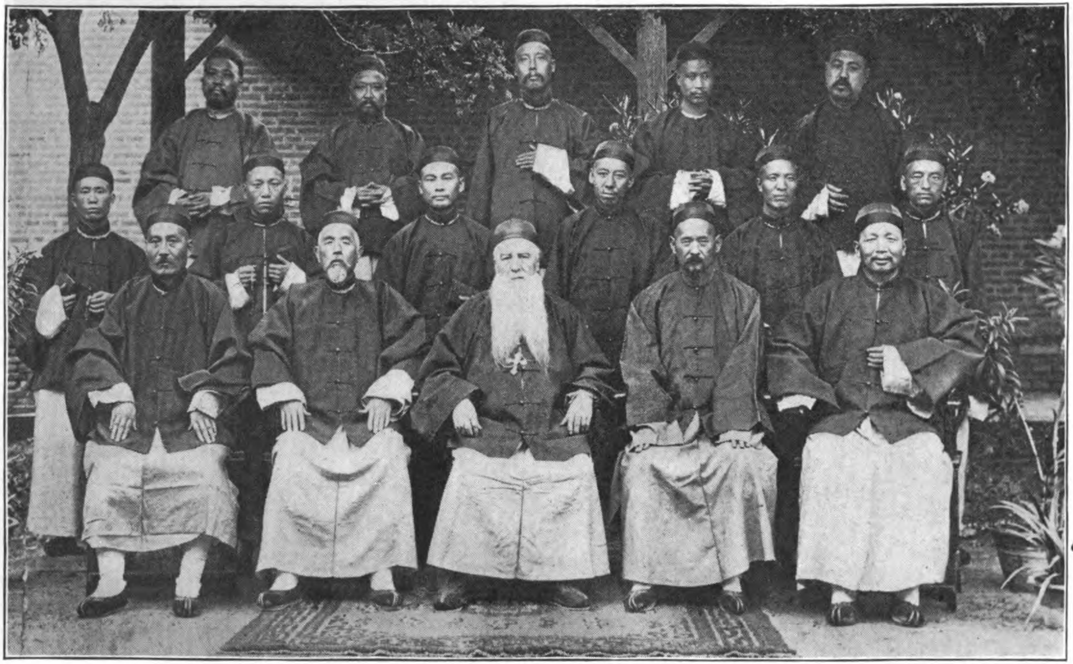

The Rt. Rev. Henri Maquet, S. J., Vicar Apostolic of S. E. Chihli, China, and Native Secular Priests

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erous sacrifices. *And a vision was shown to Paul in the night; it was a certain man of Macedonia standing and beseeching him, and saying: Pass over into Macedonia and help us. And as soon as he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go into Macedonia, being assured that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.*[1] Paul passed over to them, and when the news of the conversion of the Macedonians reached his brethren, they were greatly edified and walked with new vigor in the way of the Lord.

They tell us that we need good priests here in order that we may be well cared for. Does it follow from this that we should stand in the way of the few vocations that there are for the missions? I think the conclusion should be not to oppose the vocations to the foreign missions, but to encourage them, to look with favor upon them, and to assist them in every possible way, for I believe experience shows that the more young men a Seminary gives to the missions, the more vocations will spring up for its own field of work.

If the priests that we have at present do not suffice for our needs, when will they? Truly, indeed, the harvest is great, even in our own countries, and the workers are few; but they are not nearly as few in number as among the heathen, where there are countries that have but one missionary for more than a million souls. If some of us do not go, when will these souls be saved? *The world must go to Christ and it is we priests who must bring it to Him.* This is the wish of our Lord, and for this reason He has chosen us. Are not China, India, and the other pagan

[1] Acts xvi. 9, 10.

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countries which are *white already to harvest*,[1] a part of the great world of God? We complain of a lack of priests here at home, and yet our condition is nothing compared with theirs.

The Catholic Faith has a much wider horizon than our favored shores. We must not forget that we owe something to those people who have not yet received the gift of faith. Who will bring them this gift if we do not? Are we not called by God to bring the souls of these infidels out of the realm of darkness into the kingdom of His beloved Son? Have we not been selected like St. John to go *before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; to give knowledge of salvation to his people unto the remission of their sins; . . . to enlighten them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death?* [2] Millions of souls from all parts of the world implore our help. Shall we, who are born in the light of the true Faith, impede the advance of those few voluntary missionaries who wish to hasten to the assistance of their less fortunate brethren?

How can I convince every ecclesiastic of this most important truth, *that it is we and we only who are obliged to convert the world?* How can I impress upon the mind of every priest the fact that there are more than a *billion* souls who are yet to be saved? Christ surely died for these as well as for us.

"We can do much at home." Who doubts it? Meanwhile who will do good in heathen countries? What a poor world it would be if every one reasoned this way! One who reasons thus has not a clear conception of his grave obligation to the pagan world.

[1] John iv. 35. [2] Luke i. 76, 77, 79.

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He does not realize the great number of souls that are being lost. He cannot conceive of the misery in which so many poor souls lie buried. He has no idea of the vastness of the world, and the great mass of people who are still unbelievers compared with whom we are merely a handful. Yes, "we can do good here at home," but without a doubt, many of those who argue thus do very little good either at home or abroad. Even if they do, I repeat, *who will accomplish this work among the infidels? Who will propagate the Faith?* Is it possible that Protestants have bigger hearts than ours? Is their charity more universal? In view of the energy that they exert in propagating their errors, and in the face of their zeal and activity in bringing pagans to their way of thinking, it seems too bad to hear certain priests say, when an appeal is made in favor of vocations to the Foreign Missions, "We must look first to our own needs. We must first guard the Faith at home. We need good priests in our own parishes." In fine, permit me to say: *Who will make a conquest of the world, or, at least, who will try to conquer it for Jesus Christ, if not His priests?*

We cannot remain silent on this subject. On the contrary, we must preach it from the housetops. If Catholic missions flourish, and the forces of all the other sects vainly try to permanently convert the world to their belief, the reason must be found principally in the divine assistance with which our Lord blesses the work of our few missionaries, in the very nature of the truth they announce, and in the holy lives of these apostolic men. What St. Chrysostom wrote of the Apostles is even more true at the present

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day than in his time, namely, that they converted the world not by the miracles they performed, but because they sought not glory and had a contempt for money.

If Protestant missionaries do not exceed us in number, at least, they are almost as numerous. For activity and zeal, they can be an example to many of us, and in the material means at their disposal they easily excel us. Societies in England, America, Germany, Holland, and all other Protestant countries, whose object is to promote the diffusion of the gospel among the heathen, are very numerous, and they are most generous with their dollars and their pounds sterling for the sake of the cause. Then, too, they distribute gratuitously Bibles, and other books of propaganda. In contrast to this, Catholics do very little. Truly, *The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light.*[1] They are poorly informed who, in their praise of ours, say that the work of Protestant missionaries is without result, and that they work only in the great cities under the shadow of the national flags. To-day this is not true. The world is open to them, and it is unnecessary to say that they take advantage of it.

Their zeal is extraordinary. There is no place, no matter how secluded in the heart of Asia or any other continent where there is a Catholic mission, that there are not two or three Protestant ones of different denominations; and the invasion of the sects into the great centers is alarming. We should all know these facts, especially, we ecclesiastics. There

[1] Luke xvi. 8.

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is no excuse for ignorance, and, knowing the facts, each one who has at heart the honor and glory of God, should promote with all his power the work of the Foreign Missions, especially that of favoring vocations. The honor of the Church which alone has the obligation to convert the world to the true Faith, demands it. We must do good here, and we must do good also in every part of the world. If the majority of us must remain at home to cultivate the fields of our Lord, no one should hinder a few voluntary missionaries from going to sow good seed in the fields that are yet to be cultivated, among the heathen. St. Chrysostom, in speaking of the mission which Christ gave to His apostles, says: "You must give an account not only of your own life, but of the entire world. I do not send you to two cities, or to ten or twenty, or to one nation, as I sent the prophets, but to every land and nation and to the whole world steeped in crime."[1]

Our Holy Father, Leo XIII, a few years ago, invited his bishops to favor the work of the missions and vocations in a very special manner:

"We exhort you, therefore, venerable brethren, that, animated with trust in God and discouraged by no difficulty, you endeavor together with ourselves, to assist earnestly and efficaciously the apostolic missions. It is a question of the salvation of souls, for whom our Saviour laid down His life and made us bishops and priests to carry out the work of the saints, for the consummation of His body. Hence, although the flock which God has committed to each one of us must be carefully guarded, we must, at the

[1] Hom. xv. in Matt.

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same time, endeavor with all our power to supply to the holy missions that assistance which we remember was customary from the first days of the Church, namely, the preaching of the gospel, and the prayers and alms of pious men.

"If you know of any who, in their desire to increase God's glory, are ready to undertake sacred expeditions into foreign lands, encourage them, in order that after they have discovered the will of God, they may not yield to flesh and blood, but hasten to obey the voice of the Holy Spirit."[1]

Should not the official apostasy of some European countries, instead of lessening the zeal for the propagation of the Faith in the camp of the heathen, rather increase it? Is it not a judgment of God that brings to them this inestimable gift which in those countries children, who are perhaps too privileged, have rejected? When Northern Europe fell away from the Faith, was not the gift of God brought to India and America, where it was welcomed with great joy? Not only to the rebellious Jews, but to all His ungrateful children, did God address these words: *Therefore I say to you that the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and shall be given to a nation yielding the fruits thereof.*[2]

Let us pray that this terrible threat will never be hurled at our dear country. Let us do all in our power to preserve the Faith among us, and may God raise up in His Church great numbers of zealous, holy priests, for it is by sanctity of life and earnest devotion to the cause that we must strengthen and

[1] Enc. *Sancta Dei Civitas*, 3 dic. 1880.
[2] Matt. xxi. 43.

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repair the spiritual edifice of Christianity in our midst. If, however, we expect mercy from God and the preservation of the Faith at home, we must certainly lend a helping hand to our less fortunate brethren in far distant lands.

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Chapter XV

WHAT DOES THE MISSIONARY ACCOMPLISH?

And they shall build the places that have been waste from of old and shall raise up ancient ruins, and shall repair the desolate cities, that were destroyed for generation and generation.

***Isaias* lxi. 4.**

Now comes the final difficulty. Frequently we hear it said, "Why should we sacrifice so many young men and destroy their fondest hopes, to enlist them in a doubtful ministry, full of dangers and fraught with difficulties, when it is attended so often with no results whatever? After all their labors, what do they accomplish in many cases?

I do not intend to answer those who, inspired by their hatred for Christianity, see no good in Catholic missions and missionaries, nor do I direct my remarks to those who accuse missionaries of robbing the unhappy heathen of their peace of conscience. These men are so blinded by their hatred of religion that they cannot even see in the missionary a benefactor of civilization.

But I reply to those who, on account of the meager results of the work of some missionaries, seem to doubt their utility, or at least think that the sacrifice is quite out of proportion to the results obtained. Naturally I admit that the Xaviers who have the grace of converting souls by the thousands are few, and that a zealous priest, *in our eyes*, will do more

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good here than in a Foreign Mission, especially if it be sterile and not amenable to discipline. Notice that I have said *in our eyes.* The good that is done on the missions cannot be measured mathematically. Here we do good in an ordinary manner, and with apparent results. In the missions among heathen and savages, it is a work frequently interrupted and surrounded by hardships and difficulties. It is necessary to go from place to place, to contend with indifference on the part of the majority, and distrust from all, and to combat an ignorance that is colossal.

One meets with souls dull of apprehension, and often incapable of grasping the simplest idea of abstract things. It is frequently necessary to go among people who are corrupt and often hostile. Much time is lost in acquiring the difficult and varied idioms of the language, and we have no conception of the time that is consumed in long voyages. The work is suspended altogether during the rainy season, for at this time it is impossible to travel. For a missionary, a comfortable rectory, a grand and stately church at its side, where, accompanied by the solemnity of our ritual, he may address an attentive and well-ordered congregation, is a memory of bygone days. From such a state of affairs we can draw but one conclusion. If the work in the missions is accomplished with great difficulty, it is more meritorious. The poor, the ignorant and unfortunate, should always have the preference when there is question of the Faith. Who are poorer, more ignorant and more unfortunate than the heathen?

Even the simplest results obtained in the midst of such difficulties are worth more than the greatest

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accomplishments at home. In the missions, the little that can be done is always of great value, because, apart from the grace of God, it is brought about entirely by the missionary himself, for he cannot avail himself, as the priest at home can, of the faith of twenty centuries, of the Christian education of his people, and of so many other external helps, such as beautiful ceremonies, customs, and traditions, and the truly Christian atmosphere that pervades our home life.

The heathen and the pagan are a hundred times farther removed from the priest than any Christian here at home. The latter can always find a priest at his service, while the former see a missionary two or three times a year. The few Masses that the converted heathen hear, the occasional reception of the Sacraments, the little instruction which they receive, bring forth fruit in greater abundance in those simple souls than the constant attention which the privileged children of the Faith receive in civilized countries. These results are brought about first by God's grace, which is more generously showered upon souls that are destined to become the first fruits of the Faith; and secondly by the example of the missionary, a man who has come from another world, who is far superior to his flock, and yet serves them without ever thinking of himself. Then, too, the very difficulties that have to be overcome by the neophytes in order to embrace and practise our holy Faith, are of great assistance.

The fruits, however small they may appear, are by no means insignificant in their final results. The conversion of one man, the ransom of one slave, the baptism of one infant, may make possible a race of future

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Christians. The time considered as lost in traveling, in study, and in overcoming other difficulties, is not without merit before God, to whom the missionary offers everything. Even the misfortunes and failures are of some good to souls.

Moreover, if a missionary spends his whole life in combating difficulties without seeing any result from his labors, even if he should succumb to a fever and die before he has apparently accomplished anything, would any one be justified in saying that all this was a waste of energy? The ways of God are not the ways of man. IT IS ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN THAT NO SACRIFICE WAS EVER MADE FOR OUR LORD IN VAIN.

Just as he who receives hearty co-operation in his work, has no right to glory in himself, so he who sees no fruit from his labors, should not be disheartened. All good, past, present, and future, that has come and will come to souls, is the fruit of the life and death of One who, when He died, left only a few timid, wavering disciples. In this way we may explain many of the mysteries of God, so let no one have the presumption to discourage vocations to the missions, just because here and there the labors of the missionaries do not meet with success. Even if a missionary should die the very moment he places his foot in the new country, he accomplishes great good by the very offering of his own life. Where is the man who considers it a small thing to give his life for a good cause? *Greater love than this no man hath,* says our Saviour.

Mysterious indeed is the work of the salvation of souls. It is not what one does that counts. *To love*

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and to suffer are worth more in the sight of God. A great comfort for him who seems to accomplish little, and a great motive of humility for him who sees his affairs blessed with success, are to be found in the words of the Master, *For in this is the saying true: that it is one man that soweth, and it is another that reapeth. I have sent you to reap that in which you did not labor; others have labored, and you have entered into their labors.*[1]

It is by these criterions of faith that we must consider the so-called meager results of the work of the missionaries, and it is by these criterions also that a young man who wishes to dedicate his life to the missions must consider the work to which it has been his honor and privilege to consecrate himself. *By saving one soul you have predestined your own soul.*

But I am considering the darkest hypothesis, the case of a missionary who is sent to a people "stiff-necked and incredulous," and I have shown that in this case we must not measure his work by the same standard as we measure the labors of the ministry at home. But now let us see if it is true that he does little or nothing for religion, for progress and for civilization.

In order to answer this question it would be necessary to write several volumes instead of a few pages like these, which have not, after all, the character of an apology. Moreover, the work would be superfluous, because it has already been done. The history of the civil and religious progress of Christian nations is in great part a narration of what missionaries have

[1] John iv. 37, 38.

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Family of Native Converts, Tonga Islands, Oceania

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done in those countries which one day were missions just as the heathen countries that we are now considering. We shall find a brief exposition of what missionaries are doing in the world to-day not only for religion, but also for civilization and science, in the following opinions of eminent men.

Cardinal di Bonnechose, in one of his pastorals, makes a comparison between the conditions of the heathen before and after conversion.

"It would be difficult to imagine the low standard of morals to which the heathen are reduced. We find ignorance of the truths whose knowledge is most necessary for men, the basest superstitions, veneration of evil spirits, knavery, barbarity, indecent customs, horrible cruelty and sacrifices, even the eating of human flesh, in Asia, Africa, and in the southern islands where paganism reigns supreme.

"But when a missionary arrives upon these inhospitable shores, everything is gradually changed. He makes a deep impression upon those hearts of stone. The ferocity of tigers gives place to the meekness of lambs. Eyes once glittering with indomitable pride, now bespeak modesty and charity. Intellects obscured by absurd superstitions, once opened to our holy mysteries, receive them with the simplicity and humility of faith. Woman again acquires the place ordained for her among men. Parents again realize their holy mission; the family is re-established. An active, useful life is substituted for a wandering, indolent existence spent in hunting. Houses are built, and villages spring up here and there. On all sides one sees cultivated fields and well-kept gardens, and amidst all these, there rises,

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not as yet the stately cupola of a cathedral, but the humble roof of the House of God, built by the missionary with the assistance of his neophytes, from the top of which shines the cross. In the shadow of this sacred symbol civilization advances slowly but surely, and this admirable transformation of the people and of nature is due to the impregnating virtue of the gospel, brought to those distant shores by our apostles."

How well Père Didon treats this question:

"These divine invaders, the missionaries, are able to unify the people; and this is the first step in the development of civilization. Earthly conquerors and great nations, self-appointed colonizers, do not meet with success in this. In exchange for the liberty that they steal, and for the independence that they repress, what do they offer? Peace? The peace of slaves. Civilization? A material civilization that destroys those who enjoy it. Justice and protection? Yes, a compact to crush those who are refractory.

"It is certain that man cannot live in a higher civilization if he is not fortified by some moral power which enables him to utilize the new forces that are placed at his disposal. Otherwise these forces cause havoc and destruction. Thus we see the inferior races of Australia and Africa either openly resisting the invasion of the European, or if they do subject themselves to his authority, being corrupted little by little.

"Now we see why, in the movement of colonial expansion that attracts old Europe to distant countries, occupied by peoples, barbarous or stagnant because of their decrepit civilization, there must

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be some moral force to step in and modify their customs, to subdue the violence of their instincts, to extinguish their awful hatred, to strengthen their sense of justice and to teach them charity. Otherwise the work of the colonizer will be but a work of violent conquest, a business affair, a mercantile adventure, that will result in the destruction of the race; and the unification of humanity will be a mere dream. If, on the other hand, the Christian spirit is implanted in those regions in the same way that it was in barbarous Europe, then Africa, Oceania, and Asia will see instead of their false religions, unjust oppression, violence and dissolution, the birth of a new religion, full of life and permeated with a spirit of peace and charity, a society founded upon justice, science, liberty, and the abundance of every earthly good.

"But who will bring to these distant countries the light of Catholicism? Will it be the soldier, the Mohammedan fanatic, the Protestant minister; will it be the modern philosopher who loves to sit by his fireside and theorize, the merchant, or the bold and adventurous explorer, who will assume the obligation of bringing about a moral elevation among the heathen? If none of these, then who will it be?

"It will be the Jesuit, the Dominican, the Franciscan, the Benedictine, the Lazarist, the Marist, etc. I could go on citing names of those enlisted in the great army of the apostolate until I grew weary. But it matters little to us what particular order it may be. Naturally they all want to make known to the entire world the name of their Master; and remember — from the folds of their standard is shed abroad that spirit which is necessary to Christian

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civilization, since it alone can mould the soul of man and so restrain it that he may enjoy prosperity without being degraded and corrupted, liberty without changing it into an instrument of revolt and disorder, science without making it a slave of his passions, and the enemy of his religion."

Mons. Epivent, Bishop of Aire di Dax, in one of his pastorals, published in the Annals of the Propagation of the Faith, speaks of the contribution which the missionaries make to science:

"In our days purely scientific missions find great favor. We see them multiply, and disappear as quickly as they came. Intrepid travelers have explored Australia. They have penetrated the very heart of Africa. Brave mariners have tried to find the famous passage that leads between the two oceans to the North Pole. We applaud these courageous undertakings. We Catholics, who daily say, *Thy kingdom come*, are anxiously awaiting the time when the whole earth shall be discovered.

"But these are not the only travelers who have aided science. From earliest times missionaries have sent accounts containing most interesting information about the nature of the regions visited, and the life and customs of the idolaters whom they evangelized. Since the Jesuits published the correspondence entitled 'Edifying Letters,' it has been studied by writers of every nation. All quote this authority, and the facts reported in these accounts have been considered incontestable.

"These missionaries, accustomed to live at the courts of emperors; these studious, patient, humble men who could read and write the languages of the

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countries visited, who had traversed and explored, part by part, entire provinces, and studied the customs, religion and laws of every state; these truly learned men have enriched many an academy of science and made known the true state of things much better than those who were sent out on scientific missions; for these latter, like birds of passage, have often hastened through the countries and ruins that they were commissioned to study."

Father Janvier, who has already been cited above, is enumerating the valuable services of the missionary to science and to his own country, says:

"We may thank him from the fields of Carthage, Jerusalem, Babylon, Nineveh, and Egypt, if we see dead cities rising from the earth; if we see reappearing the monuments which give testimony of their former greatness, customs and history; and if we see their people issuing forth again to take their former appearance and life. We may thank the missionary, if our museums are filled with minerals, plants, and animals. He has sent specimens and documents without number to aid the investigation carried on by our learned men. Through his labors, our mariners know the currents and the streams to avoid, the navigable rivers, the best ports, the people who will receive them kindly, and those who are hostile. Our governments, too, may learn from him, if they wish, the exact influence of the other powers in Africa, Egypt, India, China, Japan, and Oceania. He can tell them the means employed by other governments to extend their authority, the countries with whom it would be advantageous to have commercial relations, the best sites for fortresses

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and stations for mineralogical and agricultural speculation."

Now you understand, young friends, what you can tell those who would like to dissuade you from the noble purpose of dedicating yourselves to the missions. You can tell them that they are wasting their time, for they will accomplish nothing by their arguments. Tell them that the missionaries, strengthened by God's grace, are trying to communicate to humanity all the good that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ came to bring them. Tell them, besides, that they are trying to save and sanctify themselves, because this life, better than any other, offers daily opportunities of exercising the most necessary virtues. Hence it is that, eliminating every other consideration, we may truly say whoever becomes a missioner has *chosen the best part which shall not be taken away from* him, because *but one thing is necessary.*[1]

[1] Luke x. 42.

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Chapter XVI

EXCELLENCE OF THE APOSTOLATE

The office of an apostle abounds in an infinite number of good things. It is greater than any other blessing and includes all good.

St. Chrys., *Hom. I, ad Rom.*

In presenting this consideration to you, I have been prompted by a strong desire to stimulate some generous souls to dedicate themselves to the noble work of the apostolate among the heathen. I have dwelt upon the necessity of wider interest among the clergy in the great work of the propagation of the Faith, and I have tried to make the way clear and simple for any one who feels himself drawn to the missions; but, up to the present, I have not sufficiently shown you how great and how worthy of your choice is the work that we are advocating.

You are called for nothing less than to co-operate with God in the salvation of those souls who do not yet know Him. You are called to take an active part and to consecrate your life to the noble cause of the conversion of the world. Mons. de Martino has said, that because of its excellence and sublimity, the task of the missionary may well be called divine.

"In the work of creation God had for the ultimate end His own glory. *I have created him for my glory,*[1] but for the immediate and proximate end, He had the salvation of man. *Thou, O Lord, hast created us*

[1] Isaias xliii. 7.

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for Thyself. Although man, ungrateful for the benefit of creation, rebelled against his Maker, the Father of Mercy did not forget that He had made him for eternal happiness, but immediately promised him a Redeemer, and in the fullness of time sent His only begotten Son to deliver him from the slavery of sin. Hence the sorrows, the ignominy, and the shedding of the blood of Christ. Hence the sacraments, the mercy and the grace of God which, from the abundance of His heart, He showers upon sinners; and by these acts, as the apostle says, *He will have all men to be saved.*[1]

"Thus it is plain that a call to be a missionary is equivalent to an invitation to co-operate with God, for the end of the missions is no other than to extend the kingdom of God, and thus procure the eternal salvation of souls. The vocation to the missions makes us companions and coadjutors of God in saving souls, a work truly divine.

"It is equally clear that the missionary is the minister of the apostolate of the Church. From her divine Founder the Church has received the command to perpetuate during the course of centuries this same divine mission. Hence it is that the Master said to the apostles, *As the father hath sent me, I also send you.*[2] *Going therefore teach ye all nations; baptizing them . . . teaching them . . . and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.*[3]

"This sublime mission of the apostolate that embraces the double office of teaching and administering the sacraments, the Church has faithfully accom-

[1] I Tim. ii. 4. [2] John xx. 21. [3] Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

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plished at all times. She has been successful in carrying it out in the midst of persecutions, schisms, rebellions, and the so-called Reformation, and under the attacks of Cesarism, heresies, unbelief and atheism. And in these times in which the darkness of error and the chaos of Satanic teachings threaten to engulf human society more than ever, the Catholic Church accomplishes her mission, whether it be among the faithful by raising on high the torch of truth to enlighten science and morals, or in the midst of infidels by promoting with all her power the Catholic apostolate.

"Yes, through her missionaries, the Church diffuses the light of evangelical doctrine in every heathen country, and fulfills the mandate of Christ, to preach the gospel to every creature and minister to them the means of salvation. All this proclaims the missionary to be the spokesman of the Church."[1]

We can hardly say too much in extolling the missionary's work. Our words will always fall short of the merit due him. He labors to promote the glory of God by procuring the salvation of souls who do not yet know Him. This is a work of such importance that the Son of the Eternal Father descended from Heaven in order to establish it.

The Bishop of Bayeux says:

"It is a question of co-operating in the work that has eternally occupied the mind of God, of continuing the work of the Redemption, and of applying its fruits to souls that are being lost. It is a question of extending the kingdom of Truth to which God has

[1] *Sinossi delle più interessanti notizie sull' Opera della Prop. della Fede*, Napoli, 1893.

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assigned no limits . . . for when Jesus Christ wished to establish the great Christian commonwealth, unlike those who found earthly empires, He did not assign to it the narrow boundaries of one nation, but those of the entire world, with the promise that it should last for all time. Although He left to the nations that He brought under the submission of Truth, their language, their individuality, and their independence, nevertheless He wished them to form one family, subject to the same authority; one flock subject to the same apostolic scepter; one empire governed by the same laws; and, unlike the most powerful monarch of the world, who, in surveying his territory, finds his authority limited by palisades and rivers, the spiritual head of this universal society of souls founded by Jesus Christ, can rightly boast that his voice is heard, respected and obeyed even to the distant confines of the earth.

"And this is the magnificent work in which we invite you to participate. We invite you to co-operate in the work of God himself. We raise you to the dignity of assisting in the salvation of the world. We unite you with the heroic forces which the Church has brought together for the last nineteen hundred years, in order to apply to all people the grace of Redemption and the benefits of civilization. In view of all this, I ask you, is there anything more powerful to tempt the ambition, not only of a Christian soul, but of a noble, generous heart?"

To dedicate one's life to the conversion of the heathen is a work which satisfies the desire of self-sacrifice that burns in the hearts of the most generous souls. No other work in the Church can boast of a

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nobler end, because the end of the missions is the very same as the end of the Church itself.

If it is a great thing to discover new regions, and open new roads to commerce, then surely to make the sun of Faith burst forth in unexplored lands, and to sow the prolific seed of the Evangelical Word, the source of true civilization and progress, is far more grand and noble. Who does not desire to co-operate in this? We admire and applaud the fearlessness of the explorers of new countries, but the missionaries are not less heroic. Indeed, I may say that they are even more heroic than any explorer, for their heroism, sustained by the supernatural power of their apostolic zeal, is worthy of greater encomiums, and should inspire greater emulation.

Certainly a noble mind cannot have a higher aspiration than that which stimulates him to enroll himself in the holy army which goes forth to win conquests for the Faith among infidels; for there the crowns of the victors are not stained with the blood of the conquered, nor the honors of triumph accompanied by the lamentations of the wounded.

How great a patriotism is that which incites a courageous youth to enlist in the army when his country is in danger. Obliged to fight for its independence, or to vindicate its integrity and honor, he is willing to face even death itself. All this is inspired by a dream of glory and a sentiment of patriotism. This youth has not detached his heart from the things of earth as does the missionary. He runs the risk of leaving a helpless widow and orphans, or an aged father and mother. All this is worthy of great praise, but how much more noble, more holy and

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more daring are the undertakings to which the Faith invites you!

We propose, then, that you embrace the life in which you are called to follow Christ very closely, and in which you can conform yourself in everything to the evangelical model of the true minister of Jesus Christ. In fact, the greatest dignity of the apostolic life of the missions comes from this spirit that it infuses, and to which the apostle is perfectly resigned. It is in full harmony with the course followed by the apostles and by all great missionaries, who in the conversion of the world imitate the divine traditions of the apostolate. In his thoughts and in his life the missionary is indeed a most splendid imitation of Jesus Christ. Like him who, *being rich, became poor,*[1] for our sakes, the missioner also can frequently say, *The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.*[2]

"Thus in all its noble splendor we see the beauty of following Christ, who is ever ready to help those Whom He has sent, as His heavenly Father sent Him. The missionaries, abandoning their native country and their parents, to live among lowly people without material return of any kind, live as did Jesus Christ and the Apostolic College, who were supported by the pious women that followed them from place to place. The missionaries receive their food and clothing either through the charity of the neophytes to whom they preach, or from the alms collected in Europe through the charity of others, and distributed by the various apostolic vicariates. They travel like Jesus

[1] II Cor. viii. 9. [2] Matt. viii. 20.

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in boats or on foot, going from one country to another to preach the gospel, and are surrounded by multitudes eager to see them and hear their words. Like Jesus they are sometimes welcomed by the humble, and ignored and persecuted by the great and haughty ones of this world, by learned men and by pagan priests. Like Jesus they suffer cold, heat, fatigue, and misfortune. Now they find plenty at the table of the rich, again they go without sufficient food.

"Frequently they suffer imprisonment and sometimes martyrdom. If they do not perform evident miracles as did Christ, they very often cure the sick by the blessing of God, or by the administration of the sacraments, for the medicine that they use is of itself insufficient.[1]

"Like Jesus, after a life of humiliation, in which they have labored much and apparently accomplished little, on account of the small number of conversions, even after death, they seem to be forsaken, but in reality they are rewarded with a crown of glory whose brightness shines forth in proportion to the high degree of their charity." [2]

The picture which St. Paul paints of the first missionaries applies also to the present champions of the apostolate among the heathen:

"For I think that God hath set forth us apostles, the last, as it were men appointed to death. We are made a spectacle to the world, and to angels and to men.

"We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise

[1] The writer has seen this happen.

[2] Scurati, *Zelo per la Conversione degli Infedeli*.

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in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are honorable, but we without honor.

"Even unto this hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no fixed abode.

"And we labor, working with our own hands. We are reviled, and we bless. We are persecuted, and we suffer it.

"We are blasphemed, and we entreat. We are made as the refuse of this world, the off-scouring of all even until now." [1]

Truly our apostles are a grand *spectacle to the world, to angels and to men.* Their life is one uninterrupted series of humiliations and sufferings. It is a life spent in doing good, and it offers opportunities of making the greatest sacrifices. What an honor to be *called unto the fellowship of his son Jesus Christ our Lord.*[2] What a sign of predilection it is to be invited to enlist in the little army of those who are in the field of the Church, to be enrolled in the vanguard of the soldiers of Christ, to be in the number of those blessed souls of whom Isaias said: *And they shall know their seed among the gentiles, and their offspring in the midst of people. All that shall see them shall know them, that these are the seed that the Lord hath blessed.*[2]

And elsewhere the same prophet says in an outburst of joy: *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, and that preacheth peace; of him that showeth forth good, that preacheth salvation, that saith to Sion: Thy God shall reign.*[3]

[1] I Cor. iv. 9–14. [2] I Cor. i. 9. [3] Isaias lii. 7.

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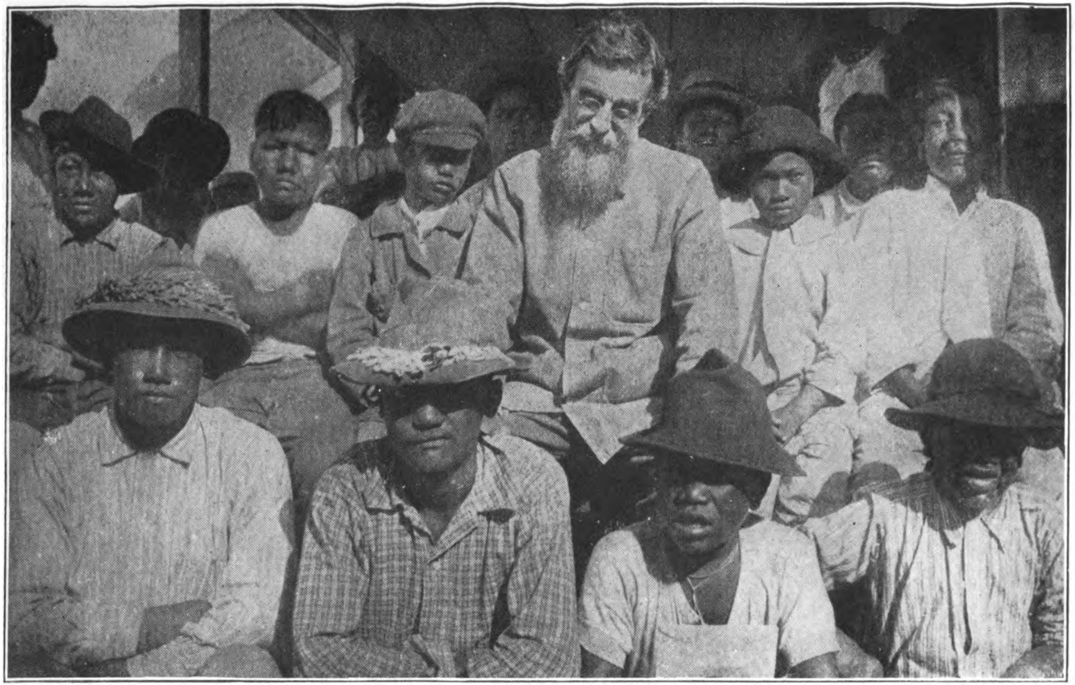

Molokai Lepers with Brother Joseph Dutton, a Civil War Veteran

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O Lord, it is through the instrumentality of these, thy elect, that *All the nations thou hast made shall come and adore before thee, O Lord, and they shall glorify thy name.*[1]

How great in Thy sight and how dear to Thy heart must they be!

[1] Psalms lxxxv. 9.

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Chapter XVII

THE MISSIONARY

There was a man sent from God whose name was John.
***John* i. 6.**

We have considered the excellence of the work of the missionary. Now we will consider the missionary himself. He springs up among us, and we have the opportunity of seeing him, if not in the heroism of his last sacrifices, at least in that of the early ones, and in the first fervor of his generosity. Nothing is so simple and yet so grand as the departure of a young man who, moved by a lively zeal for the glory of God, goes to present himself at the feet of his bishop to ask permission to become a missionary. When he has received it, he aspires but to carry Christ to the world and to bring the world to Christ. From that moment he has no other thought. Let us follow him during the period of preparation, and then to the field of his labors. We may even remain with him at the time of his death.

During the period of immediate preparation which he passes in the Institution that has received him, his life is devoted to study and prayer. Like the apostles, he is obedient to the divine command, *But stay you in the city till you be endued with power from on high.*[1] Awaiting in the upper chamber in

[1] Luke xxiv. 49.

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prayer and recollection the arrival of the promised Paraclete, the young aspirant to the missions, even if he be a priest, spends a certain amount of time in being tried and formed according to the spirit of the Institution. There he acquires habits for his whole life. There he is rounded out into a mature man. For in a short time he will be alone, far from the sound of the bell which calls him to the various exercises, without any kind advice or supervision of superiors. At that time he must be, as Mons. Marinoni remarks, "constant in his resolutions, a man of method, of prayer, of study, of zeal for souls, of mortification; in a word, he must be one of those men *who show the work of the law written in their hearts*[1] *not with ink, but with the spirit of the living God.*[2]

He becomes proficient in the languages, and knowing how Divine Providence often brings about the conversion of people by the skill of the missioner in purely human sciences and arts, with the permission of his superiors, he studies the natural sciences, music, architecture, and a little practical medicine, according to his genius and disposition.

Finally the day arrives when he is notified of his destination; then comes the day of parting; he bravely leaves his native land, his loving parents, devoted sisters and brothers, kind friends and schoolmates, and entrusts himself to the vessel that is to bring him to the camp of his future work. Take a glance at the passengers on the deck of some big ocean liner bound for distant shores. Some are walking to and fro, amusing themselves, others are chat-

[1] Rom. ii. 15. [2] II Cor. iii. 3.

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ting together, while still others are enjoying a siesta in their comfortable steamer chairs. After a while you will probably learn the destination of each one, and his reason for undertaking this long journey. One goes in the service of his government, another in search of fortune, a third for mere pleasure.

In the midst of all these you will soon single out one who is easily distinguished from the rest, because of his dress and general appearance. Perchance he is a Frenchman or an Italian. He does not participate in the dancing nor in the noisy diversions common to life on board. At certain times you will see him walking to and fro with a book in his hand, in which he is deeply absorbed. He is always reserved, but at the same time very affable, and although he has very little to do with his fellow passengers, they show him signs of respect and of deference. This man is a Catholic missionary. He alone is not traversing the seas for worldly interests. All the others look forward to some material advantage or pleasure from this long voyage. With the missionary it is quite different. He is not seeking the treasures of Golconda. He is in search of souls. He expects neither a large salary nor participation in the pomp and voluptuous pleasure of the Orient. His mind has ever before him the great ideal of our Faith, the vision of the Cross, for well he knows that through that Cross he will save many souls and redeem many poor creatures who, without his assistance, would perhaps be lost. He knows also that through the same Cross he will save his own soul and thus promote the glory of God.

Let us suppose he has reached his destination and

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finds himself face to face with his task. He has long since bid good-bye to the poetry of distant visions, to the illusions and dreams of the first fervor of his vocation, and to the theory of the Seminary. The reality rises before him with all the difficulties of practical life. He is surrounded by obstacles of every sort, a new language, strange manners and customs, a new climate. And then there is the sadness that accompanies solitude, isolation, and separation from his family and friends, into whose ears he would gladly pour his trials and failures. And last, but not least, is the struggle with discouragement! Yes, even before the missionary has tried his strength in the apostolate, properly speaking, he has already carried upon his shoulders a burden that would seem insupportable.

But he is not one of those men who, having put his hand to the plow, looks back with regret and misgivings, for a voice rings in his ears. It is the voice of grace, the voice of his vocation, that calls out to him, " Set thyself to the work, O missionary of Christ. Behold the field of the Father of the family. It is thy duty to till it. Gaze upon the souls that are buried in the darkness of death. Awaken them and enlighten them in the great mysteries of faith. Behold the sheep without a shepherd. Gather them into one flock. For this alone thou hast come. Therefore be up and doing! "

When he feels his heart burning with the fire of self-sacrifice, he banishes from his soul the temptation to vacillate, and grapples with the task before him. Would that I could picture to you the energy and charity of this man. He goes from village to vil-

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lage, from one community to another. He preaches the word of God to the poor savages. He instructs them and administers the sacraments. Like an indefatigable sower, during the day he scatters the seed of his apostolic Master in the dry earth, and as night falls, he goes to sleep begging with ardent prayer for the dew of grace to fructify the seed and the sun of God to ripen the harvest.

His strong faith does not enable him to remove mountains, but gradually to raze them; at the cost, however, of thousands of dangers and hardships. Ah, how literally we can apply to the missionary the words of St. Paul: *In journeying often*[1] — Always moving, he faces every danger, the danger of the sea, of the desert, of pagans, and of false friends who steal into the flock. *In labor and painfulness*[2] — Hardships, weariness, afflictions, frequent vigils, hunger, thirst, heat, cold, mortifications, trials of every sort are his portion.

Father Janvier again gives us a picture of the missioner engaged in his different pursuits:

"As a preceptor he tries to teach them reading, writing, and arithmetic. As a catechist he instructs both children and adults in the doctrines and dogmas of our holy religion. As a priest, he baptizes, preaches, unites in matrimony, absolves, and offers the holy sacrifice of the Mass. As a physician, pharmacist, and infirmarian, he visits and prescribes for the sick, and both prepares remedies and applies them. As a lawyer, he defends the weak against the strong, the stranger from the attacks of the natives, and the natives themselves, lest they become impover-

[1] II Cor. xi. 26. [2] II Cor. xi. 27.

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Christian Burial at Sendai, Japan. Rt. Rev. Alexander Berlioz officiating

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ished through the cunning of the stranger. As a judge and peace-maker, he reconciles enemies, and prevents the shedding of blood. As a carpenter, laborer, mason, architect, and engineer, he builds houses, schools, churches, and lays out streets. He drains marshes, hews down trees that cause malaria, and plants those that counteract its effect. He sows and reaps, tills forests and converts deserts into fertile fields.

"Thus he does all things and is of service to all. He passes from the altar to the pulpit, from the baptistry to the confessional, from the cradle of the new-born babe to the bed of the dying, from the church to the school, the asylum, and the work-shop. No work humiliates him. No undertaking discourages him. His hands, his eyes, his heart, his lips, his entire being is devoted to the propagation of goodness, civilization, and religion, without any idea of personal gain. He demands neither gold, nor pearls, nor ivory, nor precious stones. Whatever he gives, he gives gratis. In order to find words capable of expressing such generosity, such disinterestedness, such magnanimity of character, we must turn to the inspired pages and apply to the disciple what was said of the Master: He has given Himself. Yes, he has given himself, without reserve and without hope of return." [1]

"Thus the life of a missionary is spent until he falls exhausted in the very path which he himself has made in the field of the Master. Perhaps he will become a martyr to the apostolate, a martyr of self-sacrifice to that labor which consumes him even to the very

[1] Discours, Lyon, 1907.

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marrow of his bones. He may succumb to the fever that will eat up his whole being like a slow-burning fire. He may become a martyr to all the privations and sacrifices of which man is capable. Perhaps he may be a martyr in the literal sense of the word by the shedding of his blood."[1]

With an outburst of true eloquence, Father Coubé, S. J., describes the death of a missionary as follows:

"The death of a missionary is both peaceful and glorious. It is peaceful even when he dies abandoned by all, separated from his fellow-missionaries, like St. Francis Xavier under a shelter of leaves at Sancian Island. It is peaceful because his divine Friend is not far off. He is present, if not under the Sacramental Species, at least, in a manner that the dying missionary feels and understands. He is there and His breath warms the emaciated form. . . . He is there and the gentle sound of His voice brings infinite sweetness to the ear of His servant. Other voices blend with the voice of Jesus, the voices of the angels of the heathen nations who come to thank him: 'Thrice blessed brother, who hast assisted us by thy hands more august and powerful than our wings, who hast brought souls to God. . . .' He will hear also the voices of the souls that he has saved, who from the heights of heaven come to meet him with palm branches and crowns in their hands, and say to him: 'Come, father and benefactor, come and share with us the glory that we owe you.' To all these heavenly voices the missionary replies, his countenance suffused with the effulgence of that heavenly vision. Soon his soul is liberated, and accompanied by angels, he

[1] Chatelus.

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ascends to the beautiful country that is to be his eternal home.

"Our missioner is dead. He is dead far away from his native land, where perhaps no one thinks of him, save his aged father and mother, in whose thoughts he is ever present.

"He is dead, and his death is more courageous and sublime than that of the bravest soldier or sailor, who dies in foreign parts, because he has been sacrificed for a nobler and more magnanimous purpose. . . .

"He is dead, and no friendly hand will lay flowers on his grave. No, I am wrong; flowers will not be wanting. The entire Church will be filled with the sweet fragrance of the blossoms that burst forth from his tomb.

"The missionary's death may be glorious as well as peaceful. Sometimes he passes his days among a people who prefer the error and darkness of their ways to the light that the Church offers them. Upon such as these nothing short of martyrdom will have any effect. Not until the missionary has shed his blood before their very eyes will their hardened hearts soften. It is this that makes martyrdom glorious. Noble as the missionary is in life, in death he becomes still nobler. He is condemned, ridiculed, insulted by some tyrant, but he shows himself more magnanimous than his persecutor. He is tortured by the executioner, but by his noble bearing and patience, he astonishes the very man who tortures him.

"In the midst of his agony he is a living proof of the victory of God over death and hell. The pagans come to witness his torture. They are filled with horror and admiration. But yesterday they refused

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to listen to his preaching. To-day every one of his wounds is an eloquent advocate of the Truth. They listen. They glance from him to the executioner and they turn away in disgust and sadness, striking their breasts as did the Centurion of old, saying, 'This man is truly sent by God. He is too noble to have any other mission. He is the bravest character that we have ever seen.'

"And when all is over, when in the judgment hall there lie but a few scattered remains bathed in blood, they are collected and kept as holy relics. They are applied to the bodies of the sick with marvelous results. Their dismemberment has been witnessed by the people at large, and this awful spectacle brings about numberless conversions.

"The news crosses the seas, and it is known in Europe that the Church has one more martyr. Great excitement reigns among the faithful. They crowd the churches, and the solemn strains of the 'Te Deum Laudamus' rise to heaven: 'Holy God, we praise Thy name; the magnificent white-robed army of Thy martyrs sings Thy praise, O God (Te Martyrum candidatus laudat exercitus).'"[1]

Dear young men, tone down, if you will, the bright colors of this brilliant description. The missionary, however you may picture him, is a superior man, a noble character. No human mind, enlightened by faith, can desire a more lofty calling than this. He is truly a *man sent by God*. His native land is the world. His language, every language of the earth. Every man is his brother. Just as he is broad in his views, so is he a man of big heart. If it were in his

[1] P. Coubé, Sermon, Lyon, 1901.

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power, he would have every man share in the faith and love of Jesus Christ with which his heart overflows.

He well deserves the names of hero, a true benefactor of humanity, a herald of the gospel, a knight of God, a sublime follower of Jesus Christ. Each one of these names applies perfectly to him, because he is a *man sent by God.* He walks among men without having the same interests as they have. He walks among them as an angel of God, enlightening, comforting, uplifting mankind, and doing good to all. He is truly worthy of exciting in your generous hearts not only admiration, but an ardent desire to imitate him.

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Chapter XVIII

THE NECESSITY OF PRAYER

I can do all things in him who strengtheneth me.
Philip. iv. 13.

Before closing, I wish to make clear two other points that might still cause some apprehension.

You may say, "The work that you have proposed to us is indeed sublime, but, poor mortals that we are, how can we ever live up to such lofty aspirations, even if we feel inclined to follow them? Our nature is weak. It may be that, after the enthusiasm of our first fervor is over, we shall be obliged to return to the old life and regret the step that we have taken. It is true we do see missionaries who, even in their old age, have preserved an admirable zeal, and, as years go on, feel a still greater enthusiasm for the work to which they have consecrated their lives; but what assurance have we that we shall have the same perseverance?"

Or you may answer that you are not strong enough to endure the toil, the suffering, and the sacrifice that the work calls for.

The work of the missions undoubtedly requires more than ordinary virtue and fidelity in those who undertake it. Bishop Retord, Vicar Apostolic of Tonkin, who died as a result of the tortures he suffered during the terrible persecution that raged in that country in the second half of the last cen-

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tury, demanded the following characteristics in a missionary: "Unflinching fidelity and firmness, profound humility, exemplary purity of intention, untiring patience, perfect detachment from the world, denial of self and surrender of one's will, perfect resignation to the will of God, insatiable love for the Cross and for suffering, a strong aversion to the illicit pleasures of the flesh and the world, child-like simplicity, youthful zeal, broad experience, great prudence, angelic sweetness, an even disposition under the most trying circumstances, strong faith accompanied by perfect peace of mind regarding revealed truth, hope that knows no discouragement even when all seems lost, boundless charity, and with all these, a heart inflamed with such zeal for souls that it sheds its luster all over the earth, and lifts up to heaven the hearts of those with whom it comes in contact."

Do not be disheartened at this long list of requirements. When a missionary does the best he can to acquire all these virtues, which can easily be reduced to a smaller and less discouraging number, he will be at the height of his vocation, and he will preserve that enthusiasm and that faith which are of most importance. In fact, he will hold in his hand the key to success. But how will he accomplish this? The grace of God is abundant in the missions, and our Lord will never abandon one who has given up so much for Him. Remember that God never permits us poor creatures to excel Him in generosity. We must not, however, think that God gives this grace in the missions at less cost and under other conditions than here at home. Especially in the missions must a priest pray. In fact, a good missionary prays

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always, and this prayer, which is the secret of the virtue of self-abnegation, becomes easier for him on account of the very nature of the life he must lead.

Since I am writing for young men, in the hope that some, after reading my words may be led to higher things, I believe it is necessary here to make them all understand that prayer, and prayer only, is the secret of virtue and heroism, and of everything that the missionary is and does. I repeat, my intention is not to paint missionary life in glowing colors, hence I say that the missionary who does not pray merits none of the praise that people give him, and accomplishes nothing that is really lasting. At most he will be as *sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.*[1]

If our Lord invites you to follow Him, try to realize that prayer, incessant prayer, will be an absolute requisite for answering His call, and for winning an eternal crown. Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ began to preach only after He had been conducted into the desert by the Holy Spirit. He prepared Himself by prayer for the functions of His ministry, and all through the three years of His preaching He often retired during the long nights to pray, *and he passed the whole night in the prayer of God.*[2] From the apostles down to our time all holy men who have made and are still making conversions, divided their time between prayer and preaching. *But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.*[3]

In answer to the prayer of Saul, our Lord sent Ananias: *Arise . . . and seek in the house of Judas,*

[1] I Cor. xiii. 1. [2] Luke vi. 12. [3] Acts vi. 4.

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one named Saul of Tarsus, for behold he prayeth.[1] Observe the young missionary during the years of immediate preparation in the Seminary. Together with his companions he spends his time, as did the apostles in the Cenacle, *persevering with one mind in prayer*,[2] and preparing himself by study of sacred discipline to receive in the priesthood the fullness of the spirit of Jesus Christ. See how beautiful he looks as he celebrates his first Mass! Note his cheerful countenance during the touching scene of his departure! It is prayer that has made him almost divine, for we see him filled with the Spirit of God, communicated to him only through prayer. Unfortunate indeed is the young man who departs for the arduous undertakings of the missions, if he has not learned to pray. He is like a soldier sent into the fray without arms.

Let us accompany our missionary again as he paces the deck of the vessel that is taking him far away from his native land, to the place that our Lord has pointed out. He makes the sacrifice willingly, but he is still a man and he feels all the bitterness of the separation. It is this, however, that makes his sacrifice beautiful. Let him speak for himself:

"As we drifted farther and farther away from shore, I leaned against the quarter-deck and took a last long look at my native land that I was leaving forever. My eyes were riveted upon the shore. . . . What thoughts came to my mind at that moment! To how many friends did I in fancy bid a fond farewell! And as I considered my lonely condition, I wondered what would become of me. Shall I perish

[1] Acts ix. 11. [2] Acts i. 14.

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in the midst of the waves or on some inhospitable shore? Shall I become the prey of sharks, of tigers, or of savages? These were the pictures that my imagination painted, but in one moment Divine Goodness changed it all. The more difficult the sacrifice seemed to me, the greater joy it gave me. I saw numberless souls perishing because they had never seen the Cross I was bringing them. I felt God pouring soothing balm into the wounds of my heart. I felt His caresses, and I understood then, for the first time, that the missionary is a chosen one of Providence. During my whole voyage, even when the tempest raged, I was as calm and composed as if I had been standing beneath my father's roof. I said with St. Teresa, 'Of Thee, my God, and not of myself, do I think.'"

At last he sets foot on the land that he is destined to cultivate. Would that I could express all he experiences at that moment. His mind is absorbed in prayer. It is a prayer of thanksgiving, of self-immolation, of dependence upon that God who brought him there, of noble aspirations and of conquests to be gained. With these sentiments in his heart, he kisses the ground that he must fructify with the sweat of his brow, and perhaps with his blood, for in all probability this is the land which will receive his bones.

During the first years especially, the saddest trial of a missionary is home-sickness. He thinks of the dear ones far away, and memories of the beautiful Christian feasts of his country come back to him. But as in all other trials, so in this, prayer is his refuge and his salvation. One Corpus Christi while

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a missionary was traveling alone in a pagan ship, he recalled the sweet memories of home:

"How sad that day seemed to me when I thought of the magnificent feast I had so many times celebrated at Lyons. O feast of Corpus Christi! I see again thy beautiful flowers, and hear the sweet strains of thy hymns. In that moment of affliction I chanced to open the 'Imitation of Christ' and I read 'My son, do not let yourself be depressed by the cares that you undertake for me, for I have the means of rewarding you. You will not remain very long in the midst of these labors. The day will soon come in which all suffering will cease.' How good Jesus is! He is a friend at all times and in all places. We are never unhappy with Him. I now see that I was wrong in depending so much upon myself."

Prayer is the strongest weapon of the missionary. It is his greatest comfort and his inseparable companion on his journeys. How does he occupy himself during the long hours that he spends penetrating the endless forests? He prays and sings. "I sow Hail Marys," said one, "and they will surely bring forth fruit."

"The visitation of my diocese," writes a bishop of Oceania, "can be made neither by carriage, on horseback, nor on foot. It is composed of hundreds of islands. I go from one to another with a priest and some neophytes, praying and blessing God who made such a beautiful sky and gave such power to the winds. All this breaks the monotony of the waves and is a delightful pastime." Another bishop writes from China: "We travel over these rivers in canoes that look like tubs, and how many days, how many

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weeks it takes to pass from one place to another! One needs great patience and must pray like the captives of Babylon, singing lamentations and mindful of their distant native land, heaven."

During the long days of solitude and abandonment, how does the missionary pass the time? When he sees that he is going to be confined in some little hamlet for several weeks, what can he do to keep from growing weary?

During such a time, he studies and prepares his instructions, but he is principally engaged in prayer, and when the weather permits him to proceed he goes forth from his retreat, *as a giant to run the way.*[1] How fortunate he is if during his retirement he can keep the Blessed Sacrament with him! Then truly from the height of heaven he comes forth.

"I am the only Christian in this neighborhood," writes a missionary of Alaska. "During the day when the wind moans around my roof of skins, or when the snow blocks the door of my little hut, I feel sad at heart. Memories of my home flock in upon me, but I follow the counsel of the apostle St. James to sad hearts: I pray, and the good Jesus who is there by my side instantly brings me good cheer."

Still another says: "We know God is everywhere, but we feel His presence more in these distant regions when we have recourse to prayer. And thus it should be, for what would become of us poor missionaries, abandoned as we are, if it were not so? In Europe where there is little to desire, nothing to fear, and where man becomes indifferent to Providence, prayers

[1] Psalms xviii. 6.

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are frequently lacking in fervor. But how easy it is here to pray with a faith that penetrates the very heavens. *The Lord is my firmament, my refuge and my deliverer.*[1]

"I have great need of prayer, because my life here is not adapted to keep me in the spirit of fervor. While I traverse these solitary woods and vast prairies, I recite my rosary, and raise my heart to Him who is my only hope. From time to time I stop to recite my Office, while my horse wanders about in search of grass. During these moments when I am alone with God I should be all His, but the heat, the cold, the rain, or, more than all else, fatigue, greatly diminish my devotion."

The missionary prays during the course of his ministry. He prays during sickness, and when he sees that death is near, frequently his last breath is a prayer for himself or for the poor souls that he is obliged to leave. It is the spirit of prayer that animates him in the midst of the trials of life. It is the love of prayer that preserves in him a lively spirit of faith and union with God. The fruit of his communication with God is that sweetness which he is able to preserve in the midst of such adverse circumstances. Prayer is the origin of his great spirit of sacrifice and noble charity. In a word, it is prayer that makes our missionaries so different from the countless other missionaries and preachers. It is prayer that clothes them in the eyes of the people with an aureola of spirituality, and with authority to teach. These Catholic missionaries are certainly Christian heroes, loving, disinterested, pious, de-

[1] Psalms xvii. 3.

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voted, holy, sublime characters, worthy of the prodigious success that they obtain.

This spirituality, the fruit of their union with God, which is evident in their every action, makes a great impression upon pagans, who have more or less power of discretion, which enables them to recognize Catholic missionaries as ambassadors of the true God, depositories of the Truth, and guides to eternal salvation. Moved by the grace of God, these men throw themselves at the feet of the missionaries, saying, "We come to you because we are persuaded that you have the true God with you." *And many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts . . . in those days wherein ten men of all languages of the Gentiles shall take hold and shall hold fast the skirt of one that is a Jew, saying: We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.*[1]

And now we must dispel the other fear in regard to the endurance of sacrifice, labor, and suffering.

In the missions, just as God's grace is found in greater abundance, so He hears us more easily and seems to be nearer to our hearts. In His awful agony the God Man had an angel to comfort Him. The missionary is more fortunate in his trials, for he has as his comforter God Himself. But it is not entirely a life of crosses and sacrifices that is proposed to you. If there are privations and sufferings, there are also wonderful comforts and consolations, and great satisfactions.

In order that His apostles might not lose courage, our Lord, while frequently predicting the sufferings

[1] Zach. viii. 22, 23.

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and persecutions that they would have to undergo to faithfully follow His call, always comforted them with the assurance of the assistance of the Holy Spirit, the Consoler that He would send them. He encouraged them with the promise of the great reward that awaited them, and in His Transfiguration, in a special manner, gave them a glimpse of His eternal glory, in which they were to participate. On one occasion, while foretelling the persecutions that they would suffer, He immediately added, *Be glad in that day and rejoice, for behold, your reward is great in heaven.*[1] To St. Peter, who said, *Behold we have left all things and have followed thee; what therefore shall we have?*[2] Christ made this magnificent promise: *Amen I say to you, that you who have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit on the seat of his majesty, you also shall sit on twelve seats, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*[3] On the same occasion, He made the most encouraging promises to whoever, like the missionary, should leave all for His sake, reminding them that those whom He had employed to establish His kingdom, were especially called to follow the way of the Cross here on earth, if they wished to follow Him in Heaven. *If any man minister to me, let him follow me; and where I am there also will my minister be. If any man minister to me, him will my Father honor.*[4]

You, likewise, must elevate your spirit in contemplation of the reward that the divine Master has promised those who follow Him in the way of the

[1] Luke vi. 23.
[2] Matt. xix. 27.
[3] Matt. xix. 28.
[4] John xii. 26.

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apostolate, and if difficulties are placed in your way to disarm you, be comforted with the thought of the reward. Even the great apostle St. Paul was enabled to sustain the weight of his arduous mission by considering the hope of reward; *Yet so if we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified with him. For I reckon that the sufferings of this time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come that shall be revealed in us.*[1]

But we are not talking of the eternal reward that is reserved for the missionary, but of the encouragements and consolations which God, in His goodness, gives even in this life. In a letter to St. Ignatius, St. Francis Xavier says:

"I have nothing else to write you about this country except that the consolations which God gives to those who come here to convert the Gentiles to the true Faith, are such that if there is any contentment in this life, it is certainly to be found here." The Saint continues:

"Frequently I hear people who live among these Christians say, 'O Lord, do not give us such consolations in this life, for it makes it so much harder to be separated from Thee.'"

Father Nerini, a missionary bishop of Burmah, wrote:

"Ah, dearest brother in Jesus Christ, if you knew what happiness it brings one to convert souls, you would take wings and fly with all speed to Pegu."

What consolation, what joy, after a day's journey through the unexplored country, to be able to say, when you lie down to rest, "To-day the Cross has

[1] Rom. viii. 17, 18.

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penetrated a little deeper into the darkness of Paganism, and the frontier of the realm of my King has been extended a little farther. To-morrow the 'Our Father' will be recited where it was never before heard. To-morrow the Holy Sacrifice will be offered on a new altar and a new portion of the world will be redeemed." Can you imagine the joy of a missionary when a slave is ransomed, a dying man baptized, a village converted to Christ? And besides, is it not a great reward to be able to immolate oneself for God? Indeed, it is a great comfort for a missionary to think that he has consecrated his soul, his body, his hopes, his all, to the great cause to which Jesus Christ, first of all, consecrated Himself.

Words cannot express the consolation and the holy pleasure of him who can say to Christ, "Thou hast died for me. Thou hast given Thyself entirely for me. Behold, here I am. I am also entirely Thine, and wish to work for Thee and for Thy eternal interests. I desire nothing else than to make Thee known and loved by men, and for this cause I would consider it the greatest happiness to give my life."

Now, young men, you understand what it is that we propose to you; to co-operate in a divine work, to embrace a life of the highest perfection that will be crowned by such reward that he who was permitted once to taste its magnificence, wrote: *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love him. But to us God hath revealed them by his Spirit.*[1]

[1] I Cor. ii. 9, 10.

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CHAPTER XIX

WE CAN ALL BE MISSIONARIES

In the duties that join us to God and to the Church, the greatest thing to be noted is that in the propagation of Christian truth every one of us should labor as far as lies in his power.

LEO XIII, Enc. *Sapientiae Christianae.*

Now let me say a few words to those of my readers who cannot take an active part in the mission work. If you cannot go into the field yourself, try to send some one else. Remember, too, you are obliged to promote every work that furthers the cause, and among these, first and foremost, is the *Society for the Propagation of the Faith.*

In America there is great lack of interest in the missions. People know little of them, and talk little of them. What we do through the press to favor them, dwindles into insignificance before the great work that Protestants are accomplishing in that direction. Some people seem to fear that by interesting themselves in the missions, and by contributing towards their support, our charitable institutions at home will suffer.

You cannot all be missionaries. Perhaps not, but you can be devoted to those works that are indispensable to the maintenance and development of the missions. Does it not seem strange that this work meets with opposition from Catholics? Many make light of it, and look upon it as something exclusively reserved for chosen souls selected by Providence.

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Such errors and delusions are deplorable. Whoever has the grace to know Christ, and believe in Him, and *love* Him (I emphasize this last), should be interested in the propagation of the Faith throughout the world.

The fulfillment of this obligation cannot be the same for all — for the apostle who consecrates himself and spends himself without reserve, and for the father and mother of a family who have other duties. The exterior manifestation of zeal depends upon the circumstances in which Divine Providence has placed us. But the underlying idea is the same for all. The work must in no way be monopolized by a few chosen souls. It is, and should be, the task of every man of faith. No one is truly patriotic unless he is interested in the prosperity of his own country. No one is truly Christian unless he is interested in the progress of Christianity in the world.

If all the faithful should be devoted to the propagation of the gospel, is it not especially the obligation of priests? Brethren, upon you who cannot become missionaries the conversion of the heathen does not cease to have a claim. You can do much by your zeal and charity, even though you remain at home. In fact, you can do so much that, without your aid, without your interest, without your prayers, the missionaries can accomplish little. But if all the priests of the world would take a great interest in the conversion of the heathen, and would do all in their power to promote the work, how much more quickly would *all flesh . . . see the salvation of God.*[1] What priest can be indifferent to this work

[1] Luke iii. 6.

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and fail to promote it with all his power, without shirking his duty?

What meaning will that burning desire of the Psalmist, to see all people at the feet of Jesus Christ, have upon the lips of him who repeats it every day? *Let peoples confess to thee, O God; let all peoples give praise to thee.*[1] *O praise the Lord, all ye nations; praise him, all ye peoples.*[2] *And all kings of the earth shall adore him; all nations shall serve him.*[3] *From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same, the name of the Lord is worthy of praise.*[4]

The saints were all missionaries in desire, and had the conversion of the heathen very much at heart. Not being able to engage in the active work of their conversion, they begged God's grace for them by their prayers and penances. It may be well to mention here some remarkable examples given by Mons. Giacomo Scurati, the second Director of our Institute. He exhorted all those who say they find their India at home, not to forget the far distant one, but to endeavor to assist by every means in their power the salvation of those poor souls.

The holy Contemplative, Theresa of Jesus, always had at heart the souls of infidels that were being lost, and did everything in her power to obtain their conversion from her Spouse, Jesus. For this purpose, she founded the Monastery of St. Joseph of Avila, and on one occasion, in speaking to her Sisters, exhorted them to pray not for themselves, but for these poor souls, even at the cost of being obliged to remain in Purgatory until the Day of Judgment.

[1] Psalms lxvi. 4.
[2] Psalms cxvi. 1.
[3] Psalms lxxi. 11.
[4] Psalms cxii. 3.

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As the Twig is Bent the Tree is Inclined

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Gregory XV, in the Bull of her Canonization, spoke as follows of her holy zeal to save heathen and sinners:

"The boundless charity that she felt for her neighbor was manifested by many proofs, especially by the ardent zeal with which she sought the salvation of souls. She always lamented the spiritual darkness of heathens and heretics, and for their enlightenment, she not only prayed fervently to God, but also fasted, chastised her body, and even lacerated her flesh." [1]

Another member of the same Order, favored by our Lord with extraordinary graces, St. Mary Magdalene of Pazzi, had the same sentiments. In her life we read:

"This singular spirit was filled with a zeal for the conversion of others, beyond all comprehension. One time when our Lord showed her a soul filled with His grace, she was so charmed that ever after she longed to bring every one to God. Her zeal prompted her to ask God for many souls, and in great fervor of spirit, she said: 'O Lord, if I only could go to India or Turkey, I would take those dear little children and teach them all about our religion with such love and affection that whatever trouble or misfortune I suffered would be a great source of comfort and solace to me.'

"Accounts of the triumph of the Church in India and Japan, the noble work of St. Francis Xavier, caused her to rejoice, and increased her desire to help the evangelical workers whom she so much admired. One day in an ecstasy she cried out: 'Oh if

[1] Bull — *Omnipotens Sermo Dei*, § 7.

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I only could, I would take all these infidels and lead them into the bosom of Holy Church, and there I would have them purged of all their infidelity and regenerated in the saving waters of Baptism. Oh how willingly would I do this if it were possible.'

"Her heart was so set upon the conversion of these outcast souls that sleeping or wåking she always spoke of co-operating in their conversion. She frequently made offerings of the Blood of Jesus and applied many Communions and works of mercy, particularly acts of penance for this end, and she tried to inspire her novices with the same zeal."

The love of St. Alphonsus for the missions induced him to take refuge within the Congregation of the Chinese Fathers, then founded in Naples, by a priest, Don Matteo Ripa. Desiring to go to China to shed the light of the gospel upon the heathen, and hoping that he might give his life for the Faith, he asked his Superiors for permission, but being assured that this was not God's will, he co-operated with Father Ripa in increasing the number of this Congregation, and dwelt with them for some years, edifying the little family by his virtuous conduct. He showed, besides, a tender love for the young Chinese who were educated there, instructing them in knowledge requisite for the ministry and strengthening them, by his own fervor, to perform with zeal and constancy the great mission that had been entrusted to their care.

He requested the members of the Congregation to pray frequently to God for the conversion of the heathen and for the spreading of the Faith. In his fervent discourses he tried to instill into their hearts

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not only the disposition, but the longing for martyrdom. It is impossible to express the joy that filled his heart, when requested by the Propaganda to send some of the members of his Congregation to the heathen missions in Asia, he received in reply to his letter of appeal to the various houses of the Order, many spontaneous offers from those who longed to go into foreign countries and spread the gospel of Jesus Christ.

At this time his discourses treated of the happiness of the martyrs, their good fortune in being able to give their lives for Christ, and the great consolations that they received while engaged in this noble work. He himself would gladly have received such a grace from our Lord, but tried to console himself with the thought that he probably was not worthy.

Once when two Franciscans were passing through the city of Nocera, on their way to the missions, he sent for them, and after giving them a royal reception, would not permit them to depart until he had strengthened their holy purpose and confirmed them in their vocation by a fervent discourse. Naples was indeed his India.

In Father Bacci's "Life of St. Philip Neri," he states that after the Saint had read the letters from India to the Fathers of the Society of Jesus, telling of the scarcity of workers, he himself wished to go there, and sow the seeds of our holy Faith, and if necessary, shed his blood for love of Christ. The only thing that delayed his putting this lofty design into execution was the will of God, manifested to him by Father Ghettini, a holy Cistercian, to whom he went for counsel in this grave matter. In

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fact, this holy monk gave him to understand that it was revealed to him that Rome should be his India. This, however, did not lessen St. Philip's great zeal for the propagation of the Faith, and what he could not do in India he endeavored to accomplish in Rome, where he devoted himself in an especial manner to the conversion of the Jews.

And now to those who cannot become missionaries, I would say if your India is here, may God bless you. But remember — you have obligations also towards the real India, and all countries that are still in darkness. If you cannot go into the field yourself, never dissuade any one else from giving himself to the cause. If you cannot go yourself, at least, by every means in your power, especially through prayer and alms, help the missionaries and facilitate the accomplishment of their great work. To him who asks what he can do, I would suggest the following: it would be well to help the *Society for the Propagation of the Faith,* extending it where it is already founded, and introducing it where, up to the present, it has not existed. There should not be a parish of any size in the world that is not devoted to this work. It would be a good idea to found an Association of zealous priests in every diocese, who would explain conditions in the Mission Field, and encourage the establishment of the *Society for the Propagation of the Faith.*

Every priest should encourage vocations to the missions, not only among Seminarians, but also among young men who are called to a Religious life. Above all, he should try to diffuse the already existing periodicals that treat of the missions, and,

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where it is possible, endeavor to start new ones. It would be a noble task to found and promote among the clerics of all Seminaries a League of Prayer to storm the Heart of Jesus, asking Him to hasten the day when He will rule all hearts. What excellent results could be obtained by educating and instructing young clerics in their obligations to these poor souls, thus laying the foundation for a great movement to help them when they are engaged in the active life of the ministry.

Prayer is even more important than alms in a task so spiritual as that of the conversion of souls. I repeat to you, clerics, and venerable priests, what Peter Aloysius Mary Chanel, a martyr of Oceania, upon leaving for his mission, recommended to the Sisters of Buon Riposo:

"Although you are unable, dear Sisters, to go and spread the Faith among the infidels in the far distant countries of the world, yet in your blessed solitude you may be missionaries, for the apostolate of prayer is almost as efficacious as that of the priesthood.

"The great apostle of the Indies understood this well when he wrote from Asia to his beloved brethren in Rome:

"'I am but a poor sinner and am not worthy to be the instrument of God's mercy among these Indians. However, remember me in your prayers and I do not despair that God will employ me in planting the Faith in these idolatrous lands.'

"It was revealed to St. Theresa that the conversion of thousands of infidels was the fruit of her prayer. Perhaps you will say that you have not the same

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fervent spirit of prayer that animated that seraph of love, but you are all living members of the Church that never prays in vain, and with this title, have you not a right to unite your petitions with those of the Spouse of Christ? Yes, this is more than a right. It is your sacred duty.

"Often have I begged you to assist me with your fervent prayers, and I cannot doubt of their efficacy in view of the assistance that I have received from our Lord in my apostolic life up to the present. Do you wish to deprive me of this precious help? Whatever may be the distance that separates us, let us glorify our Lord for the good of souls and for our own sanctification, and living in such a manner we will never be separated, but will walk together and sooner or later be reunited in heaven." [1]

Before closing this chapter I would make one more suggestion.

If every ecclesiastical province, out of gratitude to Christ for having been called to the true Faith, in preference to so many others, would assume the obligation of providing subjects and means for the evangelization of some heathen province, how much sooner would that day come, that is so desired by our Lord, when He hopes to see all mankind united under the standard of the Cross. A Utopian idea, you may say. You are mistaken, for our little Institute here in Lombardy for the Foreign Missions provides in a poor manner, to be sure, not for one, but for six vast missions in Asia, and the missionaries for these provinces, for the greater part, are given by the bishops of Lombardy.

[1] Nicolet, *Vita del Beato Chanel,* p. 133.

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From its foundation in 1850 to the present time, 207 missioners have gone forth from the Institute of the Missions in Milan, and of these, more than 150 are from dioceses in Lombardy. I do not include in this number the aspirants in the Seminary, nor those who during this same period went to the missions from these provinces through other channels. If every diocese had its own Seminary for the Foreign Missions, what a blessing it would be! Then every Ordinary would have a well-regulated means of paying his tribute towards the enlarging of the universal Church, and the Pope would find in this active co-operation in the propagation of the Faith, one more help besides that which the Religious Orders and Congregations offer. This help would come from those who, together with himself, by divine institution are more directly charged to continue the work entrusted to the apostles, of preaching the Faith to the Gentiles.

In this manner the bond of charity would be established between our churches and those which the zeal of our missionaries, blessed by Almighty God, would establish among heathen peoples, and there would be a holy obligation on the part of our dioceses to protect the interests of those growing churches, which would look upon us as their spiritual parents. We know that the first churches were founded in this way. Certainly the Church of Antioch did not abound in ministers, and yet to those who *were ministering to the Lord, and fasting, the Holy Ghost said to them: Separate me Saul and Barnabas, for the work whereunto I have taken them. Then, they, fasting and praying, and imposing their*

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hands upon them, sent them away. So they, being sent by the Holy Ghost, went to Seleucia, and from thence they sailed to Cyprus. And when they were come to Salamina, they preached the word of God.[1]

Perhaps these wishes of mine will not be realized in the way that I have suggested — that makes no difference. It is certain, however, that the world is not yet so Christian that we priests are not obliged to interest ourselves in these problems. The twentieth century is not the time for priests to quietly dream their dreams. Protestants, as remarked above, are not sleeping. Side by side with their widespread, intense propaganda, our zeal must be so boundless that it will envelop them and their work. *Be not overcome by evil, but overcome evil by good.*[2]

We need missionaries in greater number. We need prayers and material help, and in order to obtain all these, we need a more lively interest on the part of all true lovers of Jesus Christ.

[1] Acts xiii. 2–5. [2] Rom. xii. 21.

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Chapter XX

A FINAL APPEAL

Let my doctrine gather as the rain, let my speech distil as the dew, as a shower upon the herb, and as drops upon the grass.

Deut. xxxii. 2.

In most European countries an education is not considered complete unless crowned by travel in foreign parts. It is deemed necessary for a man to have an opportunity to see something of the size of the world, and to meet other men, in order to broaden his ideas, and it is very important that a student should see in practice what he has learned in theory.

If it were possible, priests would find it very useful, as ministers of the Master of the Universe, before taking up the care of souls, to journey around the world, while in the first fervor of Ordination. If they could see with their own eyes the real conditions that exist in heathen countries, how many of them would never return, but would remain and become missionaries! Of course, this cannot be done; but is the condition of the heathen less deplorable because you have not seen it with your own eyes, or is there, on this account, less need of missionaries?

The missionaries who have seen the world, and who have at heart the honor and glory of God, are disheartened when they consider how they are handicapped in their vast field of labor; and they deplore the lack of interest in the missions on the part of

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so many at home. Hence they raise their voices to make known the great need there is of zealous workers. They invite all, and priests especially, to interest themselves in those works that in any way tend to promote the diffusion of the gospel throughout the world.

St. Francis Xavier, the apostle of the Indies, sent burning appeals to Europe, begging St. Ignatius and Father Rodriguez of Portugal, to send him a goodly supply of fervent workers on account of the needs of those boundless countries where the harvests are so abundant. In one of these letters he writes:

"An infinitely larger number of souls would be converted in the Indies, if there was not such a lack of missionaries. Many a time I have had a mind to go to the Academies of Europe, and particularly that of Paris, and cry out to all those who have more learning than charity, 'Oh, how many souls lose heaven and perish in hell through your negligence. God wishes that just as men work hard to acquire knowledge, so they should try to realize their obligation of rendering to God an account of the knowledge and the talents they have received.

"Who knows but that, moved by this thought, some would respond to the call of God? How much happier their lives would be and how certain their salvation. O Lord, with what trust in divine mercy would they, on their death beds, await the supreme and terrible moment of Judgment that no one can escape. With hearts full of joy, they would repeat the words of the evangelical servant: *Lord, thou didst deliver to me five talents, behold I have gained other five over and above.*[1]

[1] Matt. xxv. 20.

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"Unable to return to Europe, I was almost resolved to write to the University of Paris, and particularly to our old teachers [Cornet and Picard] and tell them how many millions of heathen would be converted to the Faith of Christ if there were only sufficient workers among them, who would seek nothing but the glory of God." [1]

We know for certain that he wrote to the University of Sorbonne, inviting the Professors to leave their fruitless disputations for the apostolic ministry of preaching the law of God to the Indians.

Likewise in my small way, desiring that Seminarists and priests may hear from afar a voice that will awaken a little interest for the missions, I have tried to present these few reflections to my readers. I have placed them before you with the hope that they may be able to inspire some few with the generous purpose of devoting themselves to the work. You may not be able to take a trip through these heathen countries, hence I hope this little book, written by one who has not only traveled, but lived for many years in these places, and who has frequently meditated upon the loss of so many souls on account of the lack of workers, will be able to take the place of an actual voyage. May it serve you to travel in spirit around the world, and may it excite in you a great interest in the missions. It would be well for you to frequently make this spiritual voyage on your bended knees before the Tabernacle, where dwells that Victim who was immolated for these poor pagans. Who can tell what the result might be?

In conclusion, let me address to you the words of

[1] *Lettera alla Compagnia in Roma,* 15 Genn. 1544.

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the apostle. Remember that you yourselves were once Gentiles by birth, and without Christ. You were separated from the chosen people, and not included in the promises of the divine Covenant, and yet our Lord, preferring you to so many others, has called you and made you His. . . . *you were at that time without Christ, being aliens from the conversation of Israel, and strangers to the testament, having no hope of the promise, and without God in this world. But now in Christ Jesus you, who some time were afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ.*[1]

Does our Lord ask nothing of you in exchange for this favor? Is it not our strict duty to pray, and by every means in our power promote the extension of the Kingdom of God upon earth, and especially among those people to whom He is not yet known and who serve Him not? If this great need does not interest you, what meaning have those words that are so often upon your lips: *Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come?*

"Let us remember our Creator," says Cardinal Gousset. "He is our Father and the Master of the great human family of which we are the privileged members. If we recognize His claims and His right, can we remain indifferent to His interests, when our brethren in the flesh, in deplorable ignorance drive God far from their minds, and dishonor Him by their sins? Can we refrain from resenting this outrage? Is not His glory ours? Are we not particularly responsible for their ignorance since they are our own flesh and blood?

[1] Eph. ii. 12, 13.

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"If we are called to give up every earthly good, to save His name from oblivion and from the opprobrium of nations, we must make up our minds at once. If we are called to leave our native land, our family and friends, and expose our lives for such a noble end, provided that this vocation is inspired from on High, we must correspond to it generously. Then we will pronounce with fervor and sincerity those words, *Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come.*"

Always realize your prerogative as beloved children of God, who should have at heart the honor of the Father of the family, and then the desire to become children who are mindful of His name, His attributes, His religion, and His law, will spring up spontaneously within you. Then you will have no other wish than to substitute His kingdom for that of the idols, and to lead back to Him those neglected sons, those benighted creatures who know Him not, and whom He yet longs to embrace because they really belong to Him.

Try to appreciate your character as ministers of Jesus Christ, co-workers in the diffusion of the gospel, *laboring together for the faith of the gospel,*[1] and then tell me if you do not feel inspired to pray more, and to work harder, *that the word of God may run, and may be glorified, even as among you.*[2] Consider the deplorable condition of so many millions of men who live outside the true Faith, and far from the road that leads to eternal salvation, and compare it with your happy state in which you have such abundant means of grace. Note that it was rather to

[1] Philip. i. 27. [2] II Thess. iii. 1.

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the clergy and the laity that God gave the precept, *Recover thy neighbor according to thy power,*[1] and to them also St. Chrysostom says:

"Your salvation is not assured you from the fact that you yourselves live virtuous lives, but you should desire also the salvation of others."

Think how many souls less will be saved on account of your inactivity and apathy, or as St. Paul puts it . . . *through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ hath died?* [2]

When a calamity befalls some city or town, a general commotion arises. Men vie with one another in relieving the unfortunate victims, and allow no sacrifice to hinder their zeal. Do as I have suggested to you — make a voyage around the world in spirit, and you will be persuaded that greater evils than any material misfortune afflict these poor heathens. There are spiritual famines, miseries of soul, germs of error and vice that infect every creature, and there is, worse than all, eternal death.

Consider the vastness of the world. Do not be among those who see nothing outside the narrow confines of their own country. "The world that you know is too small," wrote Christopher Columbus to Isabella, and the same should be repeated to many clerics. There is a great part of the world about which no one thinks because it lies sleeping in error and death. Priests to whom the whole world was entrusted, and who alone are the dispensers of the merits of the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ, *dispensers of the mysteries of God,*[3] should be inter-

[1] Ecclesiasticus xxix. 26. [2] I Cor. viii. 11.
[3] I Cor. iv. 1.

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ested in this. It is true that the divine Blood, the price of the redemption of all mankind, is daily offered by the hands of priests for the salvation of all, but this does not seem to be sufficient, for there are yet many people who are still very far from enjoying its fruits. The dry lands of the heathen must be moistened with this Blood, and one by one these souls must be tinged with it, in order that the angel, when he passes, may recognize them as his, and save them.

Go, therefore, you who have wept when you saw the Blood of Christ shed in such abundance, and yet apparently with so little result; for thousands upon thousands of souls are going headlong to perdition. Go to the missions and apply the merits of this Precious Blood to so many souls, who have no one to enable them to participate in its blessings. Save them and console the Heart of Jesus that desires nothing more.

Go with hearts pure and burning with love, you, whose love is without bounds, go to the missions. There you will find an ample outlet for your charity, employing yourselves entirely for God's glory and for souls. As St. Chrysostom says, "Nothing proves that one is a faithful lover of Christ like a tender care for one's brothers, and deep solicitude for their salvation." [1]

Go, young priests, whose motto is sacrifice, Children of the Sanctuary, chosen souls nourished by the graces of the Eucharist, souls that desire nothing else than to spend themselves for God. Go to the missions. There your thirst for suffering will be

[1] Hom. V Genes.

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amply satisfied, and if the palm branch of martyrdom bends towards you, rejoice that the days of bloody combats are not yet over, and that all the palm branches have not yet been gathered.

Set out for the missions, you who love labor. Make haste, for in many fields the harvest is already ripe, and the husbandman is impatiently awaiting a greater number of workers to gather it and place it in celestial granaries. Betake yourselves to His mission fields, and gather in as many souls as you can. Follow in the footsteps of those noble workers who have already *borne the burden of the day and the heats.*[1] Go you also, and if it is not your good fortune to gather in as many souls as they did, take in as many as possible, thoroughly convinced that, *neither he that planteth is anything, nor he that watereth,*[2] for the reward will be in proportion to your good-will; and when the great day of life comes to a close, you will present to the good Master the result of your labors, and thus be enumerated in the chosen army of those to whom the Psalmist refers: *Going they went and wept, casting their seeds. But coming they shall come with joyfulness, carrying their sheaves.*[3]

And now to you souls that have been pardoned much by Almighty God, you who feel the necessity of making great expiation and of acknowledging God's goodness, I turn my attention. You have promised to love God very much, hence, remember that what for others would be a heroic sacrifice, for you would be but an act of reparation. Perhaps St. Paul was thinking of those days when he persecuted the

[1] Matt. xx. 12. [2] I Cor. iii. 7. [3] Psalms cxxv. 6, 7.

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Church, when he wrote: *For if I preach the gospel, it is no glory to me, for a necessity lieth upon me; for woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel.*[1] Animated by the spirit of true repentance, you also should decide to consecrate yourself for the rest of your life to the work of the apostolate among the heathen, thus making reparation for a youth that was passed, perhaps, far from God. You also with the help of God's grace can make the same promise as that humble spirit who said, *I will teach the unjust thy ways, and the wicked shall be converted to thee.*[2]

When the Samaritan woman was converted by our Lord, she could hardly contain herself, because of her burning desire to bring others to the knowledge of Christ. *The woman therefore left her water-pot, and went her way into the city,*[3] *declaring the* graces that our Lord had worked in her, and inviting all to come and see if perchance He was not the Messias. And everywhere she spoke of Him with such zeal and fervor, that *many of the Samaritans believed in Him, for the word of the woman giving testimony.*[4]

What an admirable example of expiatory love! When we are indebted to our Lord for some great act of mercy, it is not very much for us to dedicate to Him our body and soul, all that we are and possess, to make Him, as it were, forget that one day we were unfaithful to Him, and dishonored Him. This is the idea of conversion that those generous souls had who dedicated themselves to heroic works of penance and charity, or betook themselves to hermitages and monasteries.

[1] I Cor. ix. 16.
[2] Psalms l. 15.
[3] John iv. 28.
[4] John iv. 39.

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Besides the dispositions that are required of all those who desire to give themselves to the missions, it is necessary that your conversion be approved, that it be of not too recent date, that there be no debts of justice toward any one, and that those men of God who give you spiritual direction permit you to carry out your holy resolution. If God really calls you, do not fear, but go to the missions, having in mind the promise that the workers of the eleventh hour will receive the same recompense as those who came the first hour. Put forth your best effort to make up in zeal and sacrifice for the time you have lost.

And now, young priests and beloved clerics, I am about to take leave of you, you to whom, rather from my heart than from my pen, these words have come. I hope that for all my readers they have not been in vain. May some one who, up to the present, has resisted the voice of our Lord, now say to Him, "Yes, I will become a missionary. I will not resist the call of God any longer. I will not interfere with His great project for saving all men. I will not deprive the Church of my humble services. I will not put aside the generous promptings of my conscience; I will become a missionary. I wish to contribute with all my strength and with my very life, if need be, to the spreading of the kingdom of my Jesus. I wish to immolate myself to promote His glory and procure the salvation of so many poor souls who, perhaps, await in me the Saviour.

What joy there would be in Heaven if some of you would make this decision! The Angel Guardians of those poor nations would anticipate your steps,

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would collect all your forces for the successful outcome of this noble undertaking, and would present its merit to the incarnate God who died for them. Reflect then with a spirit of faith upon this great problem that I have presented for your serious consideration, and pardon my seeming boldness in suggesting it. If in places strong expressions have been used, it is because *the charity of Christ presseth us.*[1]

I have no more to say. *I seek not the things that are yours, but you.*[2] *He that can take, let him take it.*[3] If you do not understand, you who have hearts filled with zeal, and minds that know the things of God, you *to whom it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God,*[4] who else can or should understand these things? Therefore meditate, and our Lord will enlighten you.

Let us kneel and say this prayer together:

"Send thy fear upon the nations that have not sought after thee, that they may know that there is no God beside thee, and that they may show forth thy wonders.

"For as thou hast been sanctified in us in their sight, so thou shalt be magnified among them in our presence.

"That they may know thee, as we also have known thee, that there is no God beside thee, O Lord." [5]

Queen of the Apostles, pray for us!

[1] II Cor. v. 14.
[2] II Cor. xii. 14.
[3] Matt. xix. 12.
[4] Luke viii. 10.
[5] Ecclesiasticus xxxvi. 2, 4, 5.

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